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*Ida Randolph of Virginia*

Caleb Harlan



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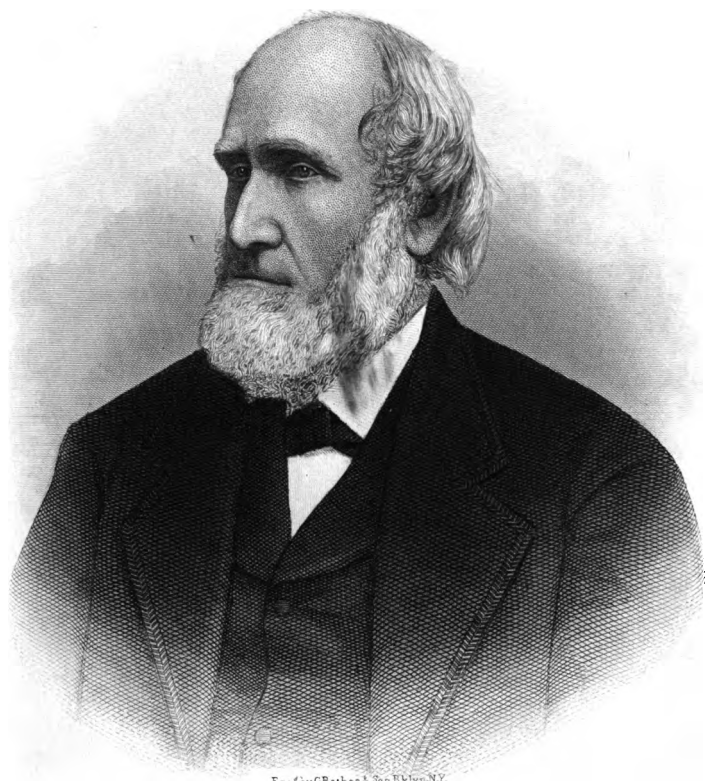












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*C. Hartland D.*

# IDA RANDOLPH OF VIRGINIA.

A HISTORICAL NOVEL  
IN VERSE.

BY CALEB MARLAN M.D.

AUTHOR OF "EPILOGUE, EPIGRAMS, AND THE FAITHFUL MARRIAGE"  
"FARMING, WITH THE MANSION, AND THE MOUNTAIN POWER"  
"SOUND HEALING" AND "THE NEW WORLD"  
OBTAINED BY DEED

THE AUTHOR'S ADDRESS: ALEXANDER, REVISED

Philadelphia:  
J. BROS. PRINTERS,  
SIXTH AND ARCH STS.  
1891.



Samuel D.

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THIRD EDITION CAREFULLY REVISED.

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**THIRD EDITION.**

# IDA RANDOLPH OF VIRGINIA.

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## CANTO I.

### I.

THREE lofty pines, alone and far away  
From grove and woodland, cast the livelong day  
A grateful shade on yon exhausted plain,  
Where naught but sedge the soil can now sustain.  
Beneath their boughs a one-roomed house is seen,  
So marred by time and rain, that logs and beam  
So open stand, that every driving storm  
Goes whistling through, and shakes its fragile form.  
Within the cabin broken chairs are set  
Around a table where perchance have met

Some men to rest, or pass their time in play —  
A fitting place to while their hours away.  
The gaping walls are crumbling to the floor,  
And at the entrance now there swings no door,  
And hence, by turning, and by glancing through  
The circling plains are always in thy view,  
And far and near thou canst, from either chair  
See every one who tries to trace thee there !

## II.

Though in the cottage cooling zephyrs come,  
'Tis hot and breezeless in the burning sun ;  
That orb, so cloudless, makes the summer day  
Too warm for man on such broad fields to stray ;  
And not a bird, nor living thing is there,  
No verdant lawn, no plant that claims thy care,  
No arch of vines, nor spring nor streamlet near,

No garden blooms, no opening buds appear ;  
But all the barren's clothed with yellow grass,  
A worthless kind scarce noticed as you pass!

## III.

What distant object now attracts the eye ?  
A coach appears ! — approaching swiftly nigh !  
And dashing fast another comes in view,  
At such an hour what have they here to do ?  
And now already they have reached the pine,  
The steeds are check'd, — each driver slacks his line,  
And, springing nimbly, clears the carriage way,  
And tips his cap, the same as if to say :  
“ Your will, my master, let me, please, obey.”  
And now alight within the cabin's shade,  
With graceful ease, with coachman's proffer'd aid,  
Four handsome men, of middle age, and drest



With taste and care, in coat, cravat and vest,  
In jeweled rings, gold studs, and massive chain,  
While each right hand supports an ebon cane.  
No color'd servant now must here remain,  
He hath an ear, — perhaps he hath some brain ;  
“ Awake there, boys ! — no longer needed now,  
Be quickly gone — no matter where or how,  
But come when evening spans the golden west,  
And yonder sun bids man prepare for rest,  
And bring each coach without a failure here,  
Precisely at the hour of six appear.”  
Such were the orders issued to each man,  
Not in the words we use, but shouldst thou scan  
The hidden meaning, thou couldst plainly see  
The import of our lines in sense agree.  
The serfs are gone, the cottage sands are bare ;  
The men are entering — each resumes his chair

Around that table, where, some days before,  
This council met and talk'd their prospects o'er !

## I V.

“Thank God,” said BUTLER, “we have found a place  
Where no dark foe, no servile negro’s face  
Intrudes upon us with suspicious ear,  
To catch our whispers, and our schemes to hear ;  
And hence we may devise some secret way  
To quell this insurrection of a day  
Which threat’ning thunders through our social sky  
As if an earthquake rock’d us passing by !  
Although, it may be, not a slave hath risen  
Except the fiends who broke the old-time prison  
And kill’d their keeper ; but we know not who  
Would strike for freedom like that reckless few,  
Had they a leader, and possess’d the hope

That serfs so poorly arm'd with whites could cope!  
A plan I have matured since last we met,  
Much better far than any offer'd yet,  
Because it ferrets out each faithless heart,  
The wicked from the good it sets apart;  
'Tis this: we must select some able man,—  
Some faithful stranger, if we only can,—  
And send him nightly and on Sundays too  
Among our blacks, to rouse them, till they do  
Some deed, or rather are prepared to fight.  
We then will seize them and may crush them right.  
They will believe him, and suppose he came  
On purpose from the North to break their chain;  
Then he can single out each restless soul,  
Can name to us who sways with most control,  
Then we may sell them, or their lives destroy,  
Should we conclude they might the South annoy."

## V.

“Strange plan,” said RANDOLPH, “what thy fears propose;  
Sometimes our servants may be secret foes!  
But wilt thou say they have not ample cause?  
What then? — we should reform our statute laws.  
Outraged and trampled, brute-like, in the dust,  
And, when degraded, held in stern disgust  
Because they manifest such puerile fire,  
When we in toil their mental force require.  
What fools, what madmen we have grown to be,  
Since our best rights we are too blind to see!  
You think by prudence and by strength of mind,  
By nightly vigils, by arm’d bands combined,  
To ’scape that law which hurled Gomorrah down,  
That dared to heed not God’s rebuking frown.  
Vain hope! — that Justice which all men should fear

Is seen relentless, crushing us now here !  
This barren plain, which once rich harvests bore,  
Yon ruin'd cot, whose logs lie scattered o'er  
The field where once a free born white man trod,  
Hath lost its tenant with its fertile sod !  
And why ? Through bondage and its blighting curse—  
The sale of souls to fill a bad man's purse !”

## V I.

“Dost thou,” said BUTLER, “crave a martyr's doom ?  
Such bitter censure well deserves a tomb,  
When uttered thus against thy native home,  
And all of earth which thou canst call thine own.  
How proudly selfish thus presume to dare  
To act against us, and decline to share  
The toil,—the conquest which we mean to gain  
O'er all who try to break the vassal's chain.

Thy massive wealth, thy well-established fame,  
Thy honor'd family, thy unsullied name,  
Shall not protect thee if thou darest to turn,  
And, traitor-like, our institutions spurn !  
Lukewarmness now may lose the heavy prize ;  
For this alone we all must sacrifice  
The patriot's love, the life to him most dear,  
His freedom, kindred, all he doth revere,  
Or leave the State, dishonor'd and disgraced,  
Or here be hanged and have his home laid waste ! ”

## VII.

“ Who, sir,” said RANDOLPH, “ will the hangman be ?  
The bondsmen, when their fetter'd limbs are free ?  
Or those whose numbers are so very few  
That talking bold is all they dare to do ? ”  
“ Hold ! Hold ! ” cried TERRELL, “ Come, this must not be,

I'll pledge my honor RANDOLPH shall agree  
To stand beside us and maintain the laws,  
And risk his life, his wealth, in our good cause,  
Which we can ne'er abandon while we live,  
Unless, like craven fools, we choose to give  
Our all away, and when bankrupt complete,  
Become poor beggars in the world's broad street ! ”

“ Tell me,” said DANDREDGE, “ where you hope to find  
A person of such trust, whose heart and mind  
Will sanction this wild scheme, and lend his aid  
To capture negroes whom he hath betrayed ? ”

“ I can,” said BUTLER, “ I will name the man,—  
Young MORTON, of Vermont, with my good plan  
Can rouse the fearless, and soon bring them out,  
And to their simple faith lay down the route  
Which leads to freedom in Victoria's lands,  
Where white and color'd mix in loving bands.

This would deceive them, — then the daring few  
Would stand revealed: — the rest our ropes shall do !”

## VIII.

“Shame ! Shame !” exclaimed RANDOLPH ; “Why speak  
that way ?

Thou know’st him not. Permit me then to say  
That noble youth is now my honor’d guest,  
His thoughts, his feelings, — oft to me expressed, —  
Are manly, and disclose a chasten’d heart,  
That could not stoop to act so base a part !”  
Then BUTLER answered, “Aye, but hear my plot ; —  
The major part I had, perchance, forgot, —  
That IDA RANDOLPH hath entire control  
O’er all the thoughts that stir that cherish’d soul ; —  
Her perfect figure, her transcendent grace,  
Her brilliant manners, her angelic face,



Her deep-trained mind, and gentle voice and smile,  
Which doth so well her father's days beguile,  
Hath firmly cast and lock'd love's golden chain  
Around young MORTON, hence through this we claim  
For our good cause his undivided heart,—  
The whole or none ; no half-way traitor's part !  
Should he this project and the task decline,  
Young IDA's arm with his shall never twine.  
Her home, her lands, that youth by force shall leave,  
And one more faithful shall her wealth receive.  
Therefore, to-morrow, at the hour of three,  
RANDOLPH, thou hearest, bring thy guest with thee ;  
But tell him not the scheme that brings him here,  
That point we'll settle when you both appear."

## I X.

RANDOLPH on BUTLER fixed a flashing eye,  
And breathed in cutting tone this stern reply :  
“ I am astounded, that an aged sire  
For gross and selfish ends should thus require  
A guileless youth to tread the path of sin,  
When certain ruin must accrue to him !  
As age advances, man should train his heart  
To find in Virtue that which will impart  
A noble bearing and a cheerful mien,  
A pride of honor and a glance serene.  
For then, the Passions having lost their power,  
The soul should blossom, and unfold a flower  
Whose priceless fruitage and immortal bloom  
Should make his grave an unforgotten tomb !  
When God our Father built the world for man,

With Might Omnipotent his fate to plan,  
He made our Nature, that success on earth  
Shall not endure devoid of moral worth !  
That he who will degraded passions serve,  
And, reckless, from the Right, by actions swerve,  
Shall soon, by failure, find that he hath err'd,  
And own that Justice should have been preferr'd !

## X .

“ My friends, take warning ! this is changeless law ;  
And if you will, by deeds, from it withdraw,  
You cannot prosper, and you shall not stand !  
Our present troubles prove this clear command !  
Why not be wise and liberate the slave,  
Since naught on earth but this our State can save  
From that misfortune felt alike by all,  
Who by discarding Right hath found their fall ?

When THOMAS JEFFERSON this cause discussed,  
'I tremble when I think that God is Just'  
He uttered, fearless, both to foe and friend;  
'Because,' said he, 'the Almighty cannot lend  
His aid to us, when slaves for freedom fight,  
But must take sides with those whose cause is right!'  
Why plan rebellions? Why on them depend,  
And deem your hand the subtle scheme can end?  
Beware, my brothers, how you light this fire!  
A word too much, a single spark of ire  
May rouse a whirlwind, and awake a flame  
No force can conquer, and no love restrain!"

## XI.

"Coward!" cried BUTLER, with sarcastic sneer,  
"My cause is just; I *dare* maintain it here!  
My slaves! I bought them; I will not release!

I'll break the Union to establish peace,  
That all encroachments on conceded rights  
By men in office and their proselytes  
May be defeated, and our noble cause  
Be better guarded by more stringent laws!"

RANDOLPH replied, "Now hear my honest word,  
Then all objections shall be calmly heard.  
Should we secede, and rival nations make,  
And this Republic into ruins break,  
The South it would three thousand millions cost,  
And years of war, and slaves forever lost!  
The Chinese wall, if ours, in all its strength,  
With its twelve hundred miles or more in length,  
And on our borders, built from sea to sea,  
On foot, on horse, on boats the serfs would flee,  
Regardless of such walls and arm'd commands.  
Our cottons fields would be deprived of hands!

Steamships of war, steel-clad on every side  
(Such France and England for defence provide),  
We must construct! — for them our coffers drain,  
Or lose the harbors of our vast domain!

## XII.

“ Our peerless Union, next to God I love,  
And, till removed to brighter scenes above,  
I'll stand by it till overwhelmed by death,  
And pray for it with all my dying breath!  
The Stars and Stripes shall be my country's flag,  
And *never* here shall float a Traitor's rag!”  
“ My God! RANDOLPH; can all that ever be?  
Then what will save our cause I cannot see,  
Unless we conquer, and the North subdue,  
And slave States make of all the Old and New!  
You *prove* secession is a deadly curse,

That heaving earthquakes never can be worse !  
Then let vast armies for the Union fight,  
And I will join them if they grant my right.  
From Maine to Texas let *my* slaves be *mine*  
While ministers regard this as no crime,  
No one but God, — no man can set them free,—  
Then make *strong* laws to bind my serfs to me !”

## XIII.

There let them talk ! while we in woods away,  
More pleasing scenes, more fragrant walks survey,  
Where birds their music, shrubs their blooms display,  
And balmy freshness crowns each opening day ;  
Where stands a mansion cool'd by mountain stream,  
Whose foaming current, sparkling, breaks the beam  
Which glistens down through over-arching shade

The axe had spared when this dear home was made.  
Those towering oaks the river flows between  
Have branchless shafts, with creeping vines all green  
Entwined around their trunks so dense and high,  
That they along their banks shut out the sky ;  
While round the dwelling lofty woods appear  
That spread their boughs o'er level ground, all clear  
Of undergrowth, that might obstruct the view  
O'er lawns, whose verdure changing airs renew.  
Come rest with me within this shaded room,  
Or on the porch when reigns the blaze of noon,  
When bright above thee fields of brilliant sky  
Are shining sultry through the forests nigh,  
And see what vistas where these shades divide  
Invite thy step to walks on every side !  
And hear'st thou not a constant gurgling flow  
Of crystal waters forced through rocks below



Yon sheving bank, which bears a fringe of flowers  
That hold their blooms through all the summer hours?

## XIV.

The mansion house thou see'st is large and long,  
In form sharp-gabled, and constructed strong,  
Although in shadow, it presents to view  
An aged fabric faced with boards anew,  
The hall and stairway in the centre stand,  
With double parlors ranged on either hand,  
And these have windows opening towards the stream  
Upon that porch from which we sketch the scene !  
And this retreat is IDA RANDOLPH's home ?  
It is, — and here she never seems alone ;  
Some favorite volume, when no guest is near,  
Some rich bouquet, some stroll when skies are clear,  
Some rural seat 'mong rugged rocks concealed,

Some deep recess by her to none revealed,  
Beguile her hours when friends are far away,  
Awakening joyous thoughts the livelong day.

## X V.

On yonder bank, behold! the lovely fair  
Now comes in view, and close beside her there  
A noble youth supports her snowy hand,  
And, talking, leads her slow along the strand,  
While she, contented, twirls her bonnet round  
Till oft its fringes brush the flower'd ground;  
And when they reach'd the step, and came so nigh  
That MORTON raised his foot, she pressed him by,  
And smiling whispered, "Once more down the lawn;  
I cannot leave this walk till day is gone,  
'Tis so delightful idly rambling here,  
When Summer's cloudless sun is setting clear,

And casting shadows broad from every tree  
O'er hill and stream, o'er mount and lowland lea !  
And hear'st that robin ? — gladsome thrills his note,  
How mellow'd on the air his warblings float,  
As if, like us, he felt this hallowed hour,  
Which calms the soul attuned to feel its power !  
How often have I wander'd here alone,  
How often have I felt if this dear home  
But held one heart in all things like to thee,  
To love, to cherish all these scenes with me,  
How blest, how happy, all my days would be,  
No cause to mar, no foes from whom to flee !”

## XVI.

“IDA ! dear IDA ! angel hearts above,  
With thee and thine this wildwood home will love,  
The clearing sky the rosy clouds adorn,

The silent eve, the silver light of morn,  
The shades of summer dark'ning o'er the world,  
The autumn leaves like crimson flags unfurled,  
The voice of steamlets mountain cliffs among,  
The crumbling seats across their chasms flung,  
The old gray rocks in twilight all the day  
In shadows dense, in pathless woods away,  
Are all to me *unutterably* endeared,  
Because with *thee* I have these scenes revered!"

## XVII.

A night of darkness shrouds the forest home,  
Though lamps are lit within, but one alone  
Lights up that hall, with dimmed and shaded ray,  
Where books are piled, where stands a rich bouquet  
Which IDA gather'd (ere the morn withdrew  
The sparkling gems — the chains of crystal dew)

To deck the table graced by gilded tomes,  
By volumes welcomed in all rural homes,  
By papers fresh with news from every clime,  
By pictured works engraved to please the time.  
But he who leans half resting on that board  
Seems careless of the light the rays afford,  
Although a romance he hath opened wide,  
And IDA seats herself so near his side  
That she half sees the page beneath his eye,  
And yet he reads not? — let him answer why.

“IDA,” said MORTON, “didst thy father’s brow  
Assume a frown because he knew not how  
We came to linger in our walks so late  
That our repast was long obliged to wait?  
Or is there something deeper far than this?  
A fate that threatens to o’erwhelm our bliss,  
That makes him gloomy and reserved towards me,—

Such chilling silence I am pained to see,  
'Tis so unusual ! — so unlike his way,  
That welcome smiles, I thought, would always play  
Around his lips when he received us here,  
As they were wont through all this happy year.  
Perhaps some rival claims from him thy hand,  
And by this coldness I should understand,  
That he is anxious I would soon withdraw,  
If so, farewell ! with me his wish is law.”  
The lady trembling turned her face aside,  
And stealthy, from her eye a tear she dried,  
Then turned on his its melting, moistened ray,  
As if was said the worst that he could say.  
Their glances met, and in that look there seem'd  
An interchange of thought, for so I deem'd,  
For in a moment each to each was clasped  
As if that meeting was on earth their last,

And there was mingled with each sobbing word  
That solemn "*never*" such as few have heard.  
Now soft and noiseless near the lovers' side,  
By stern RANDOLPH a door was open'd wide,  
And ere young MORTON could withdraw his arm  
The father's hand was placed upon his form !  
So startled by the act, the youth arose,  
But what was said, 'tis plain he scarcely knows,  
For her it seemed he would forgiveness seek,  
Yet could but bow when he essayed to speak.  
" Father ! O father ! " cried the blushing maid,  
And hid her face as on his breast she laid  
Her burning cheek, and bow'd with shame her brow,  
As if to act her part she knew not how.  
Then kindly on the two the parent smiled,  
And taking by the hand his only child,

He placed and prest it close in EDWARD'S palm  
As if he sanctioned their hymeneal bann !

## XVIII.

“ Tell me, dear father, why this eve so sad,  
So coldly kind, as if, perchance, we had  
Incurred thy censure by some thoughtless word  
Or careless deed, of which thou hadst just heard ? ”  
“ Events of moment,” then RANDOLPH replied,  
“ From you, my precious ones ! I will not hide ;  
This day, with equals, I was spurn'd to dust,  
And traitor called, because, when we discuss'd  
The public safety, I was bold to say  
That in our progress slaves are in the way !  
Men talk of freedom and the rights of man,  
Of papers publish'd despots dare not damn,  
And shout, Hurrah ! the great Republic's free !



While Europe bows to kings the fetter'd knee!  
'Tis falsehood's fiction! — an immoral lie! —  
And statesmen know it! — fools may facts deny!  
Mark this, no Commonwealth where lives a slave,  
If south or west of old Potomac's wave,  
Will suffer man in public halls to preach,  
Or in the schools her free-born sons to teach,  
That human bondage is a curse to them,  
And out of saints will make degraded men!  
Ay, truth most sacred! God-established truth,  
We dare not teach to our unlettered youth,  
Lest they, in manhood, should exert their power  
To change the statutes under which we cower.  
Let but the pastor in the pulpit stand,  
And with his Bible spread beneath his hand,  
Declare Jehovah wills to bond and free  
The rights of life so much enjoy'd by thee,

And they at once will crush him as a foe,  
Because he tells them what they fear to know.  
To-morrow, EDWARD, thou shalt ride with me,  
And in our council thou shalt blush to see  
The ruling spirits of the present day  
Denounce a freeman, and his rights gainsay  
The very instant that he breathes a word  
That might this Institution's peace disturb.  
Error, 'tis said, we safely tolerate  
When Truth is free to meet it in debate ;  
But here, throughout this rich and broad domain,  
Can I a hearing in this cause obtain ?  
Why no ! They dare not meet me face to face,  
And in discussion trust their brittle case,  
But grasp a weapon, and in fiend-like ire  
Demand my silence, and consent require !  
And *this* where I was *born* ! My God, forgive !

In such a thralldom man should blush to live !  
Millions who have no slaves are kept in chains,  
And scarce three hundred thousand despot brains  
Rule over them, and blind with fulsome talk,  
Till all so fetter'd in life's lowest walk  
Are sunk in bondage just so near the slave  
That they the right of suffrage have to waive,  
Unless, submissive, they consent to vote  
For those who will the blasting cause promote !  
Ah, me ! if in the South we dared to teach  
The truths which in the North you boldly preach,  
I'd rouse the white man in his cabin den  
To vote for whom he pleased, or die like men !”

## XIX.

A pleasant morn began that sultry day,  
When, on the barren's hot and pathless way,

RANDOLPH and MORTON rode in silent mood,  
No happy thoughts, no cheerful words intrude.  
Soon in the distance they beheld the pine,  
And saw assembling at the stated time  
Those restless men who in the cabin walk,  
And now review, perchance, in earnest talk  
The reckless scheme contrived the eve before,  
Which now, 'tis hoped, their wisdom will ignore!  
“Welcome,” cried BUTLER, as they entered in,  
“Thy guest we welcome; warmly welcome him!  
What new suggestion hast thou got to make?  
Not any, I presume. Then we must take  
The plan proposed, which all of us well know  
Will triumph sure, and outroot every foe.  
To thee, *dear* MORTON, I will just explain :  
Among our blacks (which ones we cannot name)  
Are restless souls, who may, at any time,

By secret meetings all our slaves combine  
Into a lawless mob, and strike for life,  
Till we in slumber feel the deadly knife!  
Fear may advise us to prepare and arm,  
But Wisdom says at once, Remove the harm,  
And on the faithless lay an iron grasp,  
And ere he rises weld his fetters fast;  
And so say I, and doubtless all agree;  
Therefore for this we have much need of thee.  
A meeting thou shalt call. With hundreds near,  
The cut-throat coward casts aside his fear,  
And speaks unguarded when he gains applause,  
Becomes convinced that all have joined his cause.  
Thou must applaud them, and right plainly say,  
You shall be free, and point to them the way;  
And when at last excited to revolt,  
Then mark the fiends most anxious to assault,

And we will hang the dogs before the day  
Gives them a time to sharpen knives to slay !”

X X .

“ Enough,” cried MORTON, “ I can plainly see  
The gulf of ruin thus prepared for me !  
To act a villain ! To become a spy !  
To such debasement I shall not comply !”  
“ What, sir,” said BUTLER, “ wilt thou dare decline  
To merit IDA ! — thus her hand resign ?  
The wealth she’s heir to, and that noble name ?  
Who, sir, gains these, at once achieves a fame !  
Unless thou aidst us cheerfully to defeat  
The cunning knaves with whom we must compete,  
Thou shalt, without her, instant leave the State,  
Or suffer, if thou stay’st, the felon’s fate !  
Thou art suspected, and the only way

The fatal charge most nobly to gainsay,  
We offer now, and urge thee to embrace,  
That thy good deeds may cancel the disgrace !”  
“Strange fate !” said EDWARD, “I am welcome here !  
What legal right hast thou to interfere  
In my arrangements of a home for life ?  
Or dictate schemes to me surcharged with strife ?  
Am I a slave, who dare not choose a bride  
Unless, in fetters, cringing at thy side,  
I bind myself to serve a sinking cause,  
By heading sham rebellions to your laws ?  
I *scorn* the project ! I despise the soul  
That could for this my heart’s career control !”  
“Traitor,” cried BUTLER, with a flashing eye,  
And lip that quiver’d in his stern reply ;  
“If Paul, the Apostle of our God, were here,  
He should, by preaching, make this cause appear

Supremely just, or not a single word  
Upon this subject should from him be heard !  
And dost thou think to make this State thy home,  
And our RANDOLPH'S domain, for life, thine own ?  
And yet refused to lend a little aid  
To conquer foes that would our hearths invade ?  
If such a weakness hath possess'd thy brain,  
Thou shalt ere long be undeceived again ;  
For, by my honor, I this day declare  
That he who will not by his presence share  
The daily vigils now imposed on all  
By dangers threat'ning instant to enthrall,  
He shall, relentless, be expell'd the State,  
Should he depart not when he learns his fate !  
Now read this paper, signed but yesterday, —  
A binding compact, holding thee at bay  
Till common-sense, or prudence, guides thy will,



Till what we ask of thee thou canst fulfil !  
What ! blush, dost thou, to see the honor'd name  
Of our RANDOLPH thy mad career restrain,  
By thus endorsing what is written there,  
Which proves that for our cause he hath some care ? ”

## X X I.

“ Let me,” said TERRELL, “ what seems dark explain,  
Lest he, for this, his noble host should blame :  
We are a people of peculiar taste,  
When force will answer, words we never waste  
In contest kindled to o’erwhelm a foe,  
Yet what may come we seldom pause to know !  
Our common friend, reluctant to agree  
To ask for that which we demand of thee,  
Was very anxious to reject the scheme,  
And begg’d us not to press to such extreme ;

But we insisted! — to his pride appeal'd —  
And then at last he was obliged to yield,  
And sign'd with us to execute the plot  
With thy connivance! — thus we fix'd thy lot.  
Be not astonished! In this favored land,  
By worth, slave-owners hold the chief command,  
Because our knowledge, and our strength of mind,  
Our open hearts, by social life refined,  
Exalt us far above the toiling class,  
As if prepared by fate to rule the mass;  
And hence, as masters in the Commonwealth,  
In courts of law, in every board of health,  
In House and Senate, — in the Cabinet, too, —  
We reign supreme! Without us could ye do?"  
"Aye, would nobly try!" "Would ignobly fail,  
And still against our institutions rail,  
Till Reformation shook the Union through,

And made the Constitution one-half new !  
We will not trust you ; we must hold the reins,  
And guide the Nation harnessed in our chains,  
Till slaves are useless, and the cotton grown  
No market finds in Europe or at home.  
Concede us this, and then we hope to see  
Good common-sense work out such change in thee  
That we can tolerate thy presence here,  
And in thy movements feel or have no fear.”  
“ Well, well,” said MORTON, “ since my *faithful* friend  
Hath pledged his word, I will assistance lend,  
To meet the compact most unwisely penn’d,  
Provided, first, you will this phrase amend :  
Expunge entirely all which can embrace  
His slaves, because I cannot, face to face,  
Persuade them to revolt and break their chain,  
For they would treat me with deserved disdain !

I know his bondsmen, and they know me well,  
And while I live, they shall not hear me tell  
The startling tales which I would have to form  
To rouse among them dark Rebellion's storm !  
Sir Walter Raleigh, when his cloak he cast  
For Bess to tread on, till wet soil she pass'd,  
Ye think did nobly, and record the deed  
As something worthy of a royal meed.  
Why! IDA's slaves are so attach'd to her,  
That every one I know would much prefer  
To give his body for a stepping stone,  
That she might walk in honor'd safety home !  
Therefore, what prospect could there ever be  
That serfs like hers with felons would agree  
To burn your buildings, or engage to smite  
The hand that nursed and always used them right ? ”

## X X I I.

“Well said,” cried DANDREDGE, “and we must accept  
So fair an offer, that they shall be kept  
Apart secure on that eventful night  
When he instructs our slaves to plan their flight.  
This very moment I conceived a way  
That will induce the blacks at home to stay,  
Although they might hear restless bondsmen say  
A meeting would be held, and state the day :  
RANDOLPH must organize a grand levee,  
One hundred guests at least there ought to be,  
And then with music we can pass the night.  
Now, such a scene gives every serf delight ;  
Then tell the negroes that they must remain ;  
Of course they will, because the motive’s plain, —  
At least to them it would at once appear, —

That they could not be spared to wander here ;  
But ask in secret all our slaves to come  
To this *lone cottage* when that day is done,  
And then address them with a fervent zeal,  
And when thou hast discern'd what ones should feel  
A stern rebuke, or even death perchance,  
Then come and join us in the welcome dance,  
For there thou canst communicate with us,  
And, as there will be nought we need discuss,  
Convey their names upon a paper slip,  
Then in the morning they shall feel the whip.  
The party shall we have next Friday eve ?  
What sayst thou, RANDOLPH ; canst thou then receive  
A host of friends with all their ladies fair,  
Thy smiles and banquet and rich wines to share ? ”  
“ Of course, a welcome I will give to all  
Whom IDA may select to grace the ball,

And I will pledge thee every one shall meet  
With those whose words will be a mental treat."

## X X I I I.

The council closed ; — the sun began to shine  
In milder beams beneath the cottage pine ;  
The evening breeze the leaves already stir,  
And fragrant airs come wafted from the fir ;  
The distant groves, the clouds and hills in view,  
The crystal sands, the sedge of golden hue,  
Are losing fast the orb's descending ray,  
As Twilight shuts the gilded page of Day.

## X X I V.

While on the landscape shines the evening star,  
And round it cluster glitt'ring worlds afar,  
RANDOLPH and MORTON ride their steeds alone,

And as they linger on their pathway home,  
They talk of BUTLER and his reckless plan,  
And all its features now more wisely scan.

“I hoped,” said EDWARD, “to have heard from thee  
Some compromise, at once absolving me  
From calling meetings to detect the foe,  
For what the sequence, God alone can know!  
Should they divulge it to the startled world,  
Ere you could interpose I might be hurl’d  
A mangled corpse within some cave or wood,  
To moulder there, or be the wild dog’s food.”

“Fear not,” said RANDOLPH, “thou mayst feel resigned;  
That well-formed paper which we all have signed  
Shall circulate abroad, both far and near,  
The moment when thou think’st it should appear,  
And that will shield thee here against mistrust,  
And misconception everywhere adjust.



Besides, our influence in the country round,  
In this adventure will, of course, be found  
An ample safeguard in the hour of need,  
Shouldst thou on us e'er call to intercede!"

## CANTO II.

### I.

THE morning breaks ; — the beams of golden light  
In cloudless splendor fast dispel the night,  
And so refulgent gleams the orb of day,  
The fountains sparkle in his glancing ray,  
While round the building fragrant zephyrs sigh,  
And wave the rose, whose opening blossoms lie  
Along the porch, and up the pillars twine,  
Where grapes in clusters load the trellis'd vine.  
“How sweet the air ! how pure — how freshly bland !”  
Young IDA said, as soft she leaned her hand  
On EDWARD'S arm, and paced with him the floor  
Which lay leaf-shaded 'neath her mansion door.

But while she spoke, through all the forest range  
She saw portentous signs of sudden change ;  
The air in billows, cool'd in regions high,  
Came rolling forth along the heated sky,  
And, bearing onward clouds of dusky hue,  
O'ershaded fast the landscape stretched in view.  
And then low thunder reached the listening ear,  
And then a silence came, — and then more clear  
A louder echo rolled athwart the West,  
And lightnings glimmer'd o'er a far hill's crest !

## II.

“Perchance for rain we must this day provide,”  
The maiden said, “and then will it subside  
Ere evening comes, when we expect our friends ?  
How much our pleasure on this change depends !  
I hope sincerely every guest will come,

Though it should storm till all the day is done,  
For I am certain it will not restrain  
The Butler family, whom we all disdain,  
And hence I would prefer to welcome all,  
For how perplexing if but few should call!"

"I wish — I *pray!*" said EDWARD, "it will *rain*  
Till all the roads cannot the floods contain,  
And fill the paths, and swamp each public way,  
Till black and white at home perforce must stay.  
My heart is dying! — yet it will not die,  
But like the Lost, whose fate provokes a sigh,  
It clings to life, yet hath of life no love,  
No peace on earth! — no hope of rest above!"

"Why, EDWARD MORTON! — art thou crazed or mad?  
Dost thou not jest? Or art thou really sad?  
Confess to me, thou must, the reason why  
Thou speakest thus, with such a frowning eye;

Come, tell me truly! Why despondent now?  
Is BUTLER'S son the cause? Oh, tell me! How  
Can this displease thee? I will act my part  
With studied coolness to repulse his heart.  
Have I offended? — have I asked one guest  
Against whose presence thou wouldst now protest  
Had I the boldness to recall the act,  
Or by my will couldst it at once retract?  
Do cheer up, EDWARD; — wilt thou not, for me?  
No cause hast thou in sober guise to be;  
For my sake do not sigh, or think so much  
Of trifling things, which scarce my feelings touch!"

## III.

Then MORTON answered, "I have cause to grieve,  
I must be absent more than half this eve;  
Nay! — do not ask me why or whence I go,

Some business calls me ! More than this to know  
Would only cause thee to interrogate  
That urgent motive ! — which, should I relate,  
Would mar thy pleasure ; hence, let it suffice,  
And question not what seems a strange advice,  
Be prudent now, and thou the whole shalt hear  
In proper time ; — in this I am sincere ! ”

“ Why, thou art selfish ! — first to pray for rain,  
Because thou canst not here with us remain,  
And then to hide from me what I should know,  
The whence and wherefore thou to-night must go !  
Be *careful*, EDWARD ! — snares are set for thee.  
A horrid disregard of right I see  
In BUTLER’S movements since thou crossed his path ;  
His looks, his smiles, betray a subtle wrath.  
His son he thinks can visit me again  
If thou wert banished from this dear domain.

I am impressed that I should grasp thy arm,  
And keep thee here from some impending harm !  
Oh, EDWARD MORTON, *do not leave me now !*  
Are we not blest by love's most sacred vow ?  
For my dear sake regard my falling tears,  
Or must my bright young life be crushed by fears ? ”  
“ My dearest IDA, do not weep for me ;  
A few short hours will bring me home to thee ! ”

## IV.

The sun went down, and brought the dreaded time  
To meet in secret at the cottage pine,  
From hill and vale, from swamp and cabin wall,  
From forge and field, from lonely planter's hall,  
With hopes excited high, the color'd race  
Come pouring forth with slow and stealthy pace,  
Then, moving faster as they reach the plain,

From all sides gathering press the servile train,  
Till in the cottage and around it stand  
A motley gang — an outraged, strong-arm'd band !  
Among the crowd a few keen ones are seen,  
Whose eagle glance, and step, and haughty mien,  
Betray at once the Anglo-Saxon sire,  
The nerve to dare, the soul to feel his fire !  
And all controlling, there is one whose fame  
For strength and courage makes his single name  
A host, where insults wake the wrath of those  
Who inly feel man owners are their foes,  
However much the law hath made the knaves  
Proud, lordly masters, and the meek their slaves ;  
His name is BARTRAM, but they call'd him Ire,  
Because, when struck, a light like scathing fire  
Flash'd from his eye, and made the foe recoil  
As though a rifle crash'd in their turmoil !



Instant, among them, and on every side,  
And through the cabin, all were closely eyed  
By him, with caution, and such sleepless care,  
No spy could lurk, no white man nestle there ;  
And then he posted sentinels all around  
With pine torch lamps, which brightly lit the ground,  
That they might see if intermeddlers came,  
Or treacherous comrades dared to leave the train.

## V.

Now, unattended, when the clouds of night  
Had wrapt in darkness every orb of light,  
A single horseman fast approached the place,  
So well disguised that few could know his face.  
'Twas EDWARD MORTON! —What hath lured him here?  
Go look on her who is to thee most dear,  
And ask thy heart what thou for her wouldst give,

To make her thine, with thee through life to live;  
And then remember, that which he must pay  
For IDA's hand, must here be staked to-day.  
A subtle speech he must address to them,  
That he may learn if there are faithless men  
Among those slaves, who had, of course, the power,  
Perhaps the will, to slay at any hour !  
So dense around him all his audience stood,  
That EDWARD deem'd his speech, most likely, could  
Be heard as well expounded from the steed,  
As though he stood among them on the mead.  
Therefore, while mounted, he at once began  
To trace their fate, and all their hopes to scan!

## VI.

"Poor souls of darkness !" he exclaimed to them,  
"While in your bosoms dwell the hearts of men,

You love your wives, and love your children too,  
Would God have made this so, if he made you  
So much another's that you cannot say  
'These whom we love, with us through life shall stay' ?  
What ! can eternal justice be unjust ?  
And give you love of offspring, if you must  
At any hour be torn from them away,  
And feel the breaking heart dare not gainsay.  
Your innate feelings spurn the servile state,  
For God did not for this your souls create ;  
For in your natures — in each human mind —  
Propensities like ours we always find.  
Ay ! you and I have seen the aged sire,  
Whose limbs, when happy, never toil could tire  
Nor heat enfeeble, — neither wet nor cold  
Subdue to weakness, till his master sold  
His wife and children, and thus stripp'd him bare,

And left him nothing but the tears of prayer!  
In one so broken, with his feelings wreck'd,  
Could aught but fiends, of him, in toil, expect  
The strength of manhood, and the buoyant tread  
Which met no labor and no fate with dread!  
Now watch him, sinking in his daily task;  
How hard he tries! — how weak his trembling grasp!  
O'erpress'd with sorrow, all his powers fail,  
Untold emotions o'er his strength prevail;  
No brave son near him to respect his age,  
No wife to soothe him, none his pangs assuage,  
He dies unpitied, and in dying gives  
His all to him who by such labor lives!  
Is this your fate? now tell me, can it be!  
Oh! blush with shame! if you can tamely see  
A parent's tears and blood distain your path  
And yet for him awake no saving wrath!"

## VII.

While speaking thus, a deep and ominous groan  
Of shatter'd feeling, breathed in smothered tone  
And startling accents, broke the silent night,  
And then a gnashing curse, resolved to smite,  
Came crashing louder, and aroused each heart  
To nerve his arm to grasp the fatal dart.  
Then twenty voices (aye, there might be more,  
If all were counted, than a single score)  
Began to speak, and claim the listening ear,  
And from the weak in heart to banish fear!  
Then EDWARD mark'd, and fixed within his mind  
Each savage vassal whom he saw inclined  
To strike for freedom ! to revenge the blow  
Which oft had laid his weeping children low.  
He felt rejoiced the loathsome work was o'er,

And inly thankful he had said no more  
Than was essential to inflame their ire,  
And hoped they would in words expend its fire;  
Then turning from them with abrupt adieu,  
And scarcely noticed, he at once withdrew.  
When he was gone, the bold among the crowd,  
In gestures fierce, in language reckless, loud,  
Proclaim'd that BARTRAM should assume command,  
And said, with him they could all foes withstand.  
The wily hero, from the cabin door  
Look'd on their movements, and survey'd them o'er  
A moment silent, and then sternly said,  
"The master's blood his household slaves must shed;  
But when? this evening, or a fortnight hence?  
My counsel is the fight must now commence,  
For he who trusts his fate in plots of strife  
To those whose triflings cause no risk of life,

Should fix not with them any time to slay,  
A week to come, much less some future day,  
For human feeling may at last relent,  
And while it dreads with awe the dark event,  
Disclose to others all the secret scheme ; —  
Then comes revenge, and burnings end the scene !  
There is to-night, at old RANDOLPH'S, a crowd  
Too brainless idle, too ungodly proud,  
Themselves to dress, or wash, or comb their hair,  
Or brush the dust from clothes they seldom wear,  
Or e'en to pray, except when nearly dead,  
And then they utter words so careless said,  
Without a feeling or a human thought,  
Or look which shows they ever cared for aught ;  
Such is my master — all his family too ;  
And such, I doubt not, those who hold o'er you  
The legal right to mould or guide your will,

To sell your children, or your kindred kill !  
Shall not rebellion break our fetters there  
Ere they or others can for us prepare  
The weapons of defence or send for aid  
To those who make the soldier's art their trade ?  
Within the precinct of yon distant wood  
Are cut and gathered now, where once they stood,  
A massive pile of stakes, whose ample strength  
And well proportioned parts, in size and length,  
Exactly meet our wants, and can supply  
The arms we need, when foes to foes are nigh !  
The bayonet's bloody charge will scarcely slay  
The close-rank'd files, or better clear the way  
Than those young timbers, if we use them well,  
Resolved that nought but death our might shall quell !  
The sword and rifle are unknown to you,  
But pikes the strong in arm can handle true ;



But I enjoin you to remember this,  
That in close action you may never miss ;  
Charge at the face, or breast, or just below,  
And do not raise the point to strike your foe,  
And move compact, advancing side by side,  
And in the rush to close do not divide ;  
Nor rise and follow me, that each may take  
And sharpen with the axe his battle stake !”

## CANTO III.

### I.

**I**T is the midnight hour in IDA's home,  
The lamps, all brilliant, shed through hall and  
dome

A mellowed lustre, and illumine so bright  
The forest foliage with such gleams of light  
The trees in shadow stand completely drawn  
In perfect outline o'er the verdant lawn ;  
The air is still, the shades like islands lay ;  
No leaflet stirs, no winds with brambles play ;  
But round the dwelling, and in room and hall  
The music's strains in softest cadence fall ;  
And happy guests, in groups, are listening near,

While some, in pairs, on distant seats appear,  
Some in the parlors still prolong the dance,  
And some with favorites all their joys enhance  
By strolling far among the half-lit trees,  
Where they can whisper loving words that please.  
But hark ! what war-whoop shakes the solid earth ?  
That sound hath silenced all the voice of mirth !  
The maidens blanch, the frighten'd children cry,  
The howl of dogs proclaims some peril nigh,  
The men, close crowding, gaze with speechless air,  
Those in rush out, the out drag in the fair,  
Uncertain whence the cause, or why, or where,  
The sound that shook, and made them, trembling,  
stare !  
'Twas but a moment of suspense to them,  
For instant, indoors dash'd a score of men  
With shouts of carnage, and a crash that broke

The chairs, the tables, and by strong thrusts smote  
The arm uplifted, scattering prostrate o'er  
The dead and living on a blood-stain'd floor !  
While those down trampled raise in vain the hand,  
And beg for mercy slaves that o'er them stand.  
Within one corner of that crowded hall,  
With back protected by each massive wall,  
Stands BUTLER, fighting, arm'd with half a chair,  
And bowie knife, which all such tyrants wear !  
The moment BARTRAM fix'd on him his eye,  
With shout that thrill'd he sprang towards him so  
nigh,  
It cleared the cowards that were kept at bay,  
And gave him whom he sought through all the fray !  
The jewel'd hand which held the dagger fast,  
With iron sinews BARTRAM tightly grasp'd,  
And turned the point against his master's cheek,

And from the throat soon plough'd the power to speak ;  
So fierce the conflict, and so fast the blood  
Distain'd the floor on which they struggling stood,  
That numbers paused and gazed upon the scene,  
Although still raged the combat on the green !  
Then BUTLER, staggering, droop'd aside his head,  
And for a moment seem'd among the dead,  
His open hand unclasped the bloody knife,  
And then once more there rose the signs of life,  
But at the instant that he raised his eye,  
And mutter'd feebly a complaining cry,  
The dirk was plung'd within his heaving breast,  
And back he fell, and falling sank to rest.

## II.

Virginia's courage hears her maidens' shriek,  
From room to room with wringing hands they seek

A shelter, and implore the strong, the brave,  
Their fragile forms from slaughtering fiends to save !  
At last, 'tis answered — woman's wild appeal  
The hero's heart can never cease to feel ;  
The youths in rank now firmly meet the foe,  
With knife to knife return them blow for blow,  
And, moving on in one compacted band,  
With mental power, and art to aid, they stand  
The shock which hurl'd their comrades down when **they**  
The onset met, without the arms to slay !  
A single shot, well aim'd, struck BARTRAM's head,  
And as he tumbled, and they saw him dead,  
His men, disheartened, ceased to press the fight,  
And safety sought at once by hurried flight !

## III.

The foe hath fled, except the few who lay  
In porch and parlor, in each passage way,  
With shatter'd limbs, or wounds that keep them there,  
Without the strength to 'scape so foul a snare.  
DANDREDGE and TERRILL in the mansion died,  
Where they attempted, but in vain, to hide  
From their own slaves, who found them crouch'd away,  
As children nestle when engaged at play.  
Poor RANDOLPH fell, perhaps in self-defence,  
For where he lay the conflict raged intense,  
And clashed terrific all the time they fought,  
And thus most doubtless was his ruin wrought.  
Though nearly dead, and bleeding fast away,  
He moved his lips as though he would convey  
To those around him, ere he left the earth,

Some treasured word, or fact of real worth.  
The guests about him, with his servants' aid,  
Now bore him gently to his couch, and laid  
On it his bruised and blood-stained form to rest,  
And then a snow-white sheet spread o'er his breast.

## I V.

When lowering vapors all obscure the day,  
And scarce a sunbeam o'er the waters play,  
Hast thou not sometimes seen the brow of eve,  
The lowlands and the mountain heights receive  
A glow of sunshine poured in streams of light,  
Just ere the prospect melted from thy sight?  
'Tis thus with human life; ere we expire,  
A momentary flash of living fire  
Lights up the eye, and bids a fond adieu,  
And then as sudden sinks beyond our view.



Thus RANDOLPH lay, too weak to raise a hand;  
Yet now were heard, by those who near him stand,  
A groan, a whisper ; then, in words more plain,  
His life and actions they could hear him blame :  
“ Inhuman BUTLER ! — blood betrays thy plan,  
Contrived to sacrifice the noblest man  
That ever grasped my hand or crossed my door, —  
Yet I forgive thee — thou canst plot no more ;  
Thy deep deception and thy poison breath,  
Thy rival schemes, thank God, are closed by death.  
I die detested, by myself condemned,  
That I for peace' sake could my honor blend  
With savage despots and the whelps of earth,  
And thus disfigure all my moral worth !  
Despised ! insulted ! poor, degraded worm !  
I look within, and then with loathing turn  
From what I am to what I might have been

In days more peaceful, and in such a scene !  
O God, forgive me ! — wilt thou not restore  
For IDA's sake one day, I ask no more ? —  
Redeem her friend ! — thy Mercy surely can,  
Alive or dead he is a guiltless man ! ”  
His features quiver'd, then his language fail'd,  
And weakness o'er his voice so fast prevail'd  
That soon no accent reach'd the stooping ear,  
And nought but muttering could the listener hear.

## V.

EDWARD and IDA near an aged tree,  
By chance, were seated, so that none could see  
Their shaded features, when the fight began,  
Yet they, with caution, could the conflict scan,  
Without the danger or the risk of life  
Incurr'd by those who rested near the strife ;

And there, we judge, they deem'd it wise to stay  
Till they could learn from friends who won the day;  
What more at such an hour could MORTON do?  
The slaves would claim him if but once in view,  
And this betrayal of the fatal source  
From whence rebellion looked for mental force,  
Would blast his prospects, all his friends ensnare,  
Nor wealth, nor family, could his fate repair.  
'Twas better far, in this, on hope to trust,  
And bear the sneers, perhaps the deep disgust  
Of those who fought, because he came not nigh  
Till all the feud had swept entirely by!  
When all was silent, when the foe had fled,  
And friends had gather'd or conceal'd the dead,  
He walked with IDA to her dreary home,  
Unconscious that his deeds by all were known,—  
That dying slaves had told, and others too,

Among the injured, that large numbers knew  
That EDWARD MORTON had, that very night,  
In secret council urged them all to fight!  
An ocean steamship half enwrapped in flame,  
An engine crashing guideless through a train,  
Are not more fearful than the wrath of man  
When 'gainst his life you dare devise a plan;  
And hence no language can by words disclose  
The storm of vengeance which at once arose  
Against that youth, when he among them stray'd  
And found himself by all the blacks betray'd!

## VI.

Of this disclosure IDA did not know,  
For she, the moment when she heard the foe  
Had slain her father, wildly sought the dead,  
And on his bosom cast her throbbing head,

And wept convulsive, till her strength gave way, —  
Till helpless on the corpse the living lay.  
Her female slaves, with eyes suffused with tears,  
Which show'd their love and all their anxious fears,  
Now raised her gently, and resistless bore  
Their nearly lifeless mistress from that floor.

## VII.

The morning dawns ; and what a silence reigns !  
No dead are there, except RANDOLPH'S remains ;  
The wounded foe, and all the guests are gone !  
And what a home ! — whate'er you gaze upon  
Seems changed in aspect and all out of place !  
And of the conflict, — what a frightful trace !  
The slaves are busy, lifting things around,  
And jar of tables is the only sound  
Heard in the mansion all the lonely day,

Save when, with knives, they scraped the gore away.  
So deep the pang that fell on IDA's heart,  
Such poignant suffering the events impart,  
That she, unconscious, seem'd in swoon to lay,  
Without the strength, or wish, one word to say  
Although a dream-like feeling cross'd her mind,  
So indistinct it could no utterance find,  
That EDWARD MORTON had been torn from her;  
But that misfortune could to him occur! —  
She did not, could not entertain the thought;  
For one so noble, most assuredly, ought  
To pass unblemish'd every search of man,  
Though they his actions should unsparing scan.  
Thus waned the hours; and when the sunset came,  
And her crush'd heart found some relief from pain,  
She feebly walk'd the porch with servants' aid,  
Each arm supported by a faithful maid.

Then they perceived approaching through the wood,  
A kind young neighbor, who well understood  
The warm attachment MORTON could but feel  
For this poor orphan; and in friendship's zeal,  
He brought the tidings of that sad event,  
That EDWARD's foes would not their course relent;  
That proof against him was so startling, plain,  
That hope of pardon was absurdly vain;  
That they intended, without loss of time,  
To fix a beam across from pine to pine,  
And when completed, hang the prisoner there,  
Despite the law, or interceding prayer!

## VIII.

The thunder-cloud which gloom'd her mental sky,  
Now flash'd its lightning through her kindling eye,  
And shiver'd from her every servant near,

And o'er her visage, bursting bright and clear,  
The mental sun shone out, and courage came ;  
And stern resolve in high-born features flame !  
She walks erect, a proud, heroic maid,  
Sustained by thoughts that ask no servile aid,  
And ere her favorite horse in field was caught,  
And saddled firm, and, prancing, near her brought,  
She stood prepared, and mounts with graceful ease,  
And scarce the rein her hand had time to seize,  
Till voice and whip launch'd off the noble steed,  
Which bore her, bird-like, far beyond the mead.  
She reach'd the cottage ; and against the pine  
She saw a ladder in full length recline,  
And high, athwart the space, from tree to tree,  
A beam was fastened, and a rope hung free.  
A dozen idlers, — poor, misguided men,  
With five or six distinguished scarce from them



By better clothing and more decent air,  
Had this important part perform'd with care,  
And now were lounging all about the cot,  
Some playing cards, while some had liquor got,  
And all were merry and in boisterous glee  
When IDA RANDOLPH rode beneath the tree.  
Old BUTLER'S son was there, and had control,  
And seem'd, by one consent, the guiding soul,  
For what he wish'd was done, and what he said  
All sanctioned, too, by toss of hand or head.

## IX.

"Pray tell me, BUTLER, what all this doth mean!"  
Said IDA, pointing to the gallows beam:  
"Hast thou a prisoner, doom'd this day to die?  
I crave to see him! — canst thou this deny?"  
"Ay! IDA RANDOLPH, by to-morrow's sun,

The deed of justice shall be surely done ;  
A dozen horsemen have gone far and near,  
To rouse the planters and invite them here  
By sunrise, or, at least, by six or eight,  
To witness with the rest his certain fate,  
And thou, with all the world, art welcome, too,  
And then the culprit thou canst closely view."

"BUTLER," said IDA, "I will ask once more,  
Remove the barricade which bars the door,  
And let me enter! I desire to speak  
To him, ere you this groundless vengeance wreak!"

"Why, that we need not do," the foe replied,  
"The felon may, through either wall, be spied,  
And talk'd, and whisper'd to,—and just as well  
As if enclosed with him in that old shell."

She turn'd her horse along the cottage side,  
And stooping, through the logs the prisoner eyed,

So tensely fetter'd, that the hempen band  
Benumb'd and almost paralysed his hand;  
And then address'd him : " EDWARD, lean thy head  
Against the open wall of this old shed,  
One word they grant us, if we thus will speak,  
If in this crevice thou canst press thy cheek."  
The youth complied ; her lip just touched his ear,  
She whisper'd low, yet this he could but hear :  
" To-night, O EDWARD ! — at the hour of ten,  
With arms to rescue ! I'll be here again !"  
And then, out-speaking, in her usual tone,  
With steed more tightly rein'd to dash for home,  
She utter'd sad what seem'd a last adieu,  
Then touched her horse, and from the cot withdrew  
In rapid boundings far across the plain,  
And reach'd, as darkness closed, her own domain.

## X.

Now in the parlor IDA stands, and round,  
With mute obedience, and with gaze profound,  
Some thirty men intently watch her eye,  
And marvel who could her one wish deny.  
“My faithful slaves,” said she, “on you alone,  
My feeble person and this friendless home  
I cast unguarded, and implore your aid  
To hold secure from foes its honor’d shade.  
Young EDWARD MORTON, whom you love so well,  
And whose pure worth no youth can e’er excel,  
Without a doubt is doom’d too soon to die,  
If rescued not from those who round him lie!  
And who will rescue? who will risk his life?  
And hand to hand and breast to breast in strife  
Contend for EDWARD, and by force succeed,

And yield not to them, while there's one to bleed?  
You answer, all?" "Yes, all," was shouted round,  
And gestures fierce proclaim'd that cheering sound  
No idle boasting, that would disappear  
When signs of vengeance show'd the foemen near!  
"Thank you, my brave men! and now arm for fight,  
No time have we to lose in talk to-night;  
On BROOKS, our foreman, I enjoin the care,  
The arms and horses instant to prepare,  
And when completed, join me at the door,  
By nine, not later, not one moment more."

## XI.

Her wish and order every man obey'd,  
And ere an hour the blacks, in full parade,  
Came marshalling forth, and prompt in columns form,  
And stand prepared the foemen's works to storm.

Then IDA mounted, and advised her men  
To move in silence through each grove and glen,  
And all to march in file, not as they stood,  
Till they had pass'd the outskirts of the wood.  
This order was preserved while on the plain,  
And not a whisper rose from that dark train,  
And not a sound, except the little made  
By crush of leaf or branch while in the shade.  
When they arrived at last so near the place,  
That, through the night, a practiced eye could trace  
A moving figure, or a sentinel nigh,  
If any stood between them and yon sky,  
They halted, and in silence wait the word  
To dash upon the foe the instant heard.  
As all was hushed around the cot and pine,  
And naught could now be seen but their outline,  
The maiden shudder'd, and supposed that they,

The foe and EDWARD, had gone far away.  
She stepp'd less noiseless, and walk'd up alone,  
And started to perceive, on block and stone  
The revellers lay, all wrapp'd in quiet sleep, —  
Their heavy breathing proved it calm and deep.  
'Twas plain to her that not an anxious thought  
Had cross'd their minds, that MORTON'S friends, or aught  
Would e'er disturb them, or with vassals dare  
To rescue him, while closely cabin'd there.  
She stood perplexed! — how should she act towards  
    them?

An easy task, to march up all her men  
And strike them, sleeping, leaving none to tell  
From whom, or how the fatal death-shots fell.

## XII.

While undecided, near her, soft arose  
A gentle sound, which came not from her foes ;  
That knock, she thought, perchance was EDWARD'S call.  
She stepp'd and listen'd near the cottage wall,  
And placed against it her attentive ear  
Just where the feeble noise came out most clear ;  
And then, what strange emotions thrill'd her heart,  
For MORTON whisper'd, and new plann'd her part.  
"Tell BROOKS," said he, "the ladder which our foe  
Against the pine had rear'd some hours ago,  
Now lies neglected by the cabin's side ;  
Let him climb it, and then the boards divide  
Which lie so loosely on this crumbling cot,  
And when he hath a partial opening got,  
He can descend within and loose my hand ;



Now go, and gently issue this command."  
How anxious IDA watch'd, with hopes that pray,  
The score of arm'd men who in slumber lay,  
While her good servant up the ladder went  
And soft, from log to log, in his descent  
Crept down within the cabin to the floor,  
That to them all he might the youth restore.  
But just when MORTON rose to view, and came  
With rapid step, and sudden touch'd the plain,  
The bondsmen could no more their hearts restrain ;  
With shouts of joy, and screams whose loudness thrill,  
They rush'd to greet him, and then all was still.  
The sentinel sleeping on his post at night,  
And sudden roused by flash of battle's light,  
Starts not more terrified his foes to see  
Than those that sound awaked beneath the tree.  
They rise, and, stumbling, rush from side to side,

Awhile behind the cottage cringe to hide,  
And now for safety fly to woods most near,  
And howl for comfort as they disappear.  
The news was spread, by morning's earliest light,  
That twice five hundred slaves, concealed by night,  
Were moving East, and that the living blast  
Destroyed, disarmed, and burn'd whate'er it passed!  
That EDWARD MORTON had assumed command,  
That blacks, on all sides, so increased his band,  
They would outnumber soon, in foot and horse,  
The state militia in its greatest force!

## XIII.

When home, with IDA, EDWARD came once more,  
And enter'd, weary, its most welcome door,  
They found the vassals whom she left on guard  
So much alarm'd, they had each entrance barr'd.

They said that near them two of BUTLER's gang,  
Or other ruffians, had on chargers sprang,  
And dash'd, like hunters, far across the plain,  
The moment that was heard the coming train.  
This news was fearful, and of course the door  
Was bolted strong, as it had been before,  
And blacks were station'd at the windows high,  
And order'd to report if foes drew nigh ;  
While MORTON plann'd some mode of self-defence,  
Or means to leave, should they a siege commence.  
What should be done this dark and dreary night ?  
Would it be wise in him to wait for light,  
When round the house, through all the forest green,  
By morning's dawn the foemen might be seen ?  
Within the parlor, dimly lighted now,  
For scarce would prudence one small lamp allow,  
They sat and listen'd, whispering each to each,

Lest spies without might hear a louder speech ;  
The sighing winds, the voice of leaves that stirr'd,  
The tramp of steeds, the lightest footstep heard,  
Induced the maiden oft to lift her eye,  
As though she ask'd if danger was not nigh.  
Thus pass'd the time, till in the outer hall,  
Divided from them by a massive wall,  
They heard a boring sound ! what can it be ?  
And then, like pistol shots, the clock struck three !  
“That frightens me !” said IDA, glancing round,  
“I ne'er before have heard that solemn sound  
Prolong'd by echoes in each distant room,  
It hath a voice prophetic of our doom !”

## X I V .

“The dawn ! is it so near ?” exclaimed the youth,  
Who scarce could deem that warning spoke the truth,

So earnest had they talked the future o'er,  
And there resolved on earth to part no more.  
They had arranged the course they would pursue,  
And of the slaves, detail'd a faithful few  
To bear the corpse, RANDOLPH'S remains, away  
Across the fields, by secret paths, ere day.  
When this procession left the house alone,  
And silence settled once more on that home,  
Two steeds conducted near the porch with care,  
Began to stamp, as if alarm'd while there.  
"IDA," said EDWARD, "now hath come the time,  
If ready, mount thy horse when I do mine,  
And follow speechless till we pass the wood,  
We may, with caution, all their guards elude."  
They deemed it prudent to avoid the road  
On which the bondsmen bore their cover'd load,  
And turn'd their horses from the path, around

A field whose verdure echo'd back no sound.  
And thus in stillness they pursued their way,  
And unmolested, though perhaps there lay  
A band so near them, that a careless word  
By either utter'd, might have then been heard.

## X V.

They reached the graveyard just as in the sky  
The fragment of a moon rose on the eye  
Beyond a cloud, whose verge the rays adorn,  
While its far base, in glow, gave signs of morn.  
Unwelcome dawn! The corpse, without a word,  
Though tears were shed, was in the earth interr'd  
So fast, yet noiseless, that the stars of night  
Still look'd on them when it had pass'd from sight.  
But this, though hurried, was alas too late,  
For arm'd and mounted, watching near the gate,

Four men were posted, eager to receive  
The youth the moment he essay'd to leave.  
This MORTON saw, and quickly form'd his plan,  
And caution'd IDA that they should not scan  
That ruffian host with too intent a glance  
While moving from them, lest it might, perchance,  
Excite suspicion, and provoke a call  
Before their steeds could spring the graveyard wall.  
"Now ride," said he, "right towards the northern end,  
And slowly move, as if we both intend  
To turn again when we have seen some grave,  
And do not mean by this our lives to save.  
And mark, remember, when we reach yon side,  
Although a hazard, still it must be tried,  
The steeds must leap the wall and clear the ditch,  
And if they falter, do not spare the switch!"  
While speaking thus, they gently moved away,

And bid the slaves in quietude to stay,  
As if they waited anxious their return,  
And further orders only paused to learn.  
They had proceeded half across the lot  
Before this scheme was guess'd; and then a shot  
From gun or pistol whistled past their head,  
And 'gainst a tombstone near impinged its lead.  
No word was needed now to rouse their speed,  
The ruffian's shout, the tramp of coming steed,  
Sent IDA forward on her matchless horse  
So fast and furious that the crashing force  
Bore down before it bush and brier and tree,  
As if he spurn'd each fence that cross'd the lea.  
When EDWARD with an effort gain'd her side,  
He felt his bosom swell with manly pride,  
For not a feature show'd one shade of fear,  
But beam'd on him a glance that could but cheer.



But where are those, that band of desperate men,  
Who follow'd for awhile, and fired on them,  
As o'er the wall they disappear'd from view,  
Despite their shouts, and all their shots could do?  
They are not idle; up the public way,  
And urging all they meet to join the fray,  
They lash their steeds, and keep a watchful eye  
On clouds of dust awaked by those who fly.  
The planters, gazing on the strange uproar,  
Fling up the windows, or from open door  
Shout after them, and ask to know the why  
A youth and maiden rush'd so madly by.  
No answer is return'd, but wave of hand  
Implores the gazer fast to aid the band;  
'And this short summons brings out many a youth  
On active steed, resolved to learn the truth.  
And now for miles along each winding road,

From spacious mansion, and from mean abode,  
Men may be seen all day to join the chase,  
And strain their eyes to catch the faintest trace  
Of those whom distance so concealed from view  
That naught but dust betray'd the course they flew !

## XVI.

The sun at noon pour'd down his scorching beam,  
The tired horse went staggering towards the stream,  
The shaded banks invite his limbs to rest,  
Yet still, by madness, onward — onward prest,  
Though trembling, as the hill checks his career,  
He falters not, and fast impell'd by fear,  
With mighty effort gallops weary on,  
Till in the West twilight is nearly gone.  
They pause at last upon a rising ground,  
And gaze with discontent on all sides round,

As if interrogating all they saw,  
And of the traitor, would some answer draw.  
A stranger seated underneath a tree,  
Confess'd when question'd, those they wish'd to see  
Had pass'd that way, perchance an hour before,  
On steeds so tired they scarce could travel more ;  
And then he saw them ride beyond the hill,  
And then return, as if by change of will,  
And enter that large house they saw in view,  
And this, upon his oath, he said was true.  
A sudden joy flash'd out from every eye,  
To hear that MORTON was at last so nigh,  
That if with caution they approach'd the door,  
He could upon his steed escape no more,  
The boisterous mirth awaken'd by this news  
Appear'd, though doubtful, even to infuse  
A better spirit in each sinking jade,

For now the lashings faster progress made.  
They reach'd the dwelling, and all rush'd to see  
If in the stable it could surely be  
The horses of RANDOLPH that fill'd the air  
With smoke-like vapors which arose from there.  
When thus convinced, beyond all chance of doubt,  
That by good fortune they had traced them out,  
Their savage feelings were at once express'd  
By hearty gestures which almost caress'd.

## XVII.

The house was enter'd, while the windows round,  
From which, by jumping, aught could reach the ground,  
Were closely watch'd by two arm'd men at each,  
Whose eager hopes were shown by whisper'd speech.  
The host received them with that calm surprise  
A dog bestows, with half-averted eyes,

On strange intruders when they cross the door,  
And uninvited dare to tread the floor.

“We come,” said BUTLER, “to arrest and hang  
The youth, who, with a lady, lately sprang  
From yonder horses, and then enter’d here,  
*A fact* which we by *proof* can make appear!”  
“Why! that’s my only son and his young wife!”  
Exclaimed the host, “and *you* demand his life!  
It is impossible! — they cannot be  
The man and maiden whom you wish to see!  
Because I know them, — and can truly say  
That youth, from childhood to the present day,  
By word or deed, ne’er gave me cause to blush,  
Or by his manners waked the slightest flush!”  
“That trait,” said BUTLER, “proves he is the one,  
For never lived, ’tis said, a nobler son  
Than that young MORTON, till fanatic zeal

Produced a madness fatal to his weal !”

“ And yet,” the host replied, “ ’tis not the same.

Though I acknowledge, Morton is our name,

And will confess that like your foe, we feel

For men in bondage that fanatic zeal

Which you are pleased to think will make men mad,

If they before, an angel’s goodness had ;

But this conviction may be traced to birth,

As old Vermont contains our native earth.”

“ And that confession,” BUTLER quickly said,

“ Confirms suspicion,— and the why, you dread

To call your son, who is, too well you know,

The one whose deeds have made the South his foe !”

Within the room that instant stepp’d the youth,

Whose looks so near proclaim’d the surmise truth,

That BUTLER grasp’d his pistol! then as quick

Replaced the weapon, and in voice so thick

It almost choked him, he inquired the way  
He came by steeds which EDWARD rode that day.  
The son replied : " This eve, while near yon mill,  
Descending towards the base of this steep hill,  
We saw a youth and lady urging fast  
Their steeds, as if to reach, while day should last,  
Some place of shelter from the coming night,  
For even then the sun was scarce in sight.  
We met them, and confiding, talk'd awhile,  
Then *wish'd* that fortune might upon them smile,  
So we consented that the steeds we rode  
Should be exchanged, because, to our abode  
Their tired horses could, of course, proceed,  
While ours, all fresh, would bear them off with speed.  
How glad I am they have escaped so well,  
And if conjecture can the distance tell,  
They are by this time twenty miles from here,  
And by the dawn their foes they need not fear."

## XVIII.

Near Columbia, — Susquehanna's pride,  
Where crystal waters wash a mountain side,  
Checquesalongo rears his giant crest,  
While close beneath his brow, which fronts the West,  
A stately mansion sleeps among the shade,  
So deep embower'd no eastern storms invade.  
'Twas here the wanderers, if report be true,  
A shelter found, and just that welcome, too,  
Which cheers the heart, and clears the mind of care,  
And all its comforts begs the guests to share.  
And here they met, by chance, an old divine,  
Invited, opportunely, there to dine,  
Who soon consented, when the feast was done,  
To make two hearts, in Scripture phrase, but one.





IN MEMORY OF  
WILLIAM S. FRIST.

A YOUNG LAWYER OF STERLING MERIT AND ABILITY.

THE eighth of November, seventy-one,  
There fell to the floor a talented son;  
But not a burn, nor a powdery stain  
Where the cold lead entered that youthful brain  
Could be seen by the Surgeon's searching eye  
To prove the flash of the weapon was nigh.  
But inspired words from an angel band  
Declared that he fell by a Rival's hand;  
For they were all there that eventful night,  
When his spirit took its heavenward flight.  
They whisper, Though ages may roll away,  
There is one who cannot forget that day,  
Through all the future he shall remember  
That *blood-stained* night, the eighth of November!

ADVICE TO A DEAR FRIEND IN HER  
EIGHTEENTH YEAR.

FLORENCE, dear Florence, sweetest rose of thy  
home,

Leave men of low station severely alone ;  
For there will come one so portly in measure,  
And mental endowment and worldly treasure,  
He will please thy mind, and delight thy mother,  
And seem in deportment more dear than a brother ;  
Then give him the love of thy noble young heart,  
And he will pray nightly you never may part !

6

ELFLORA

OF THE

SUSQUEHANNA,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY  
CALEB HARLAN, M. D.,  
WILMINGTON, DELAWARE.

*Presented to the author 1879*

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## PREFACE.

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THE following Poem, excepting a few verses, was written more than forty years ago.

Why was it not then published? The reason was, the author would not spare the means, at that early day, to bring out the work in a handsome and attractive form. Hence it was laid away and the time of its appearance indefinitely postponed. But now my gray hairs remind me that ere long I shall be called upon to experience the grandest event in human life—the departure of my soul to a more glorious home—and that it is time to put my affairs in order for the change. Large piles of letters and papers must be burned, or disposed of in some other way. And at last I must decide what I will do with the manuscript of *ELFLORA OF THE SUSQUEHANNA*.

It must be destroyed or published. I cannot bear to leave it to the tender mercy of some disinterested person. It might fall into the hands of a literary pirate, or it might be brought out in a garbled edition—a disgrace to the author and an insult to the heroine. Then burn the poem! No, I will not. It shall be published, out of regard to that beautiful and pure being whose history I have attempted to portray.

The scenes, the characters, interested my boyhood. The events were engraven upon my heart. I loved them as we cherish the idols of other days. Then why not preserve them in poetry? Yes, *ELFLORA*! for thy sake alone I endeavored well to do it. Thou wert ever fond of the voice of the Muse, and, though the world may neglect thee, in the homes and the hearts of a few, if possible, thou shalt be enshrined for ever.

# ELFLORA OF THE SUSQUEHANNA.

---

## CANTO THE FIRST.

### I.

THOUGH cool the morns, though fresh the winds  
at play,

Though mild the warmth that blooms the blush of May,  
Throughout all Nature hath a change begun,  
The forest shades proclaim the Spring hath come ;  
The watchful birds December winds had driven  
To seek in torrid lands a snowless heaven,  
With cheerful song now hail the halcyon hours,  
A home shall greet them wreathed in fruits and flowers.



## II.

By Susquehanna's waves, that brightly sweep  
Her hundred hills enlightened freemen keep,  
Secluded stands a mansion, mouldering on  
In shade and moss through shining seasons gone.  
The verdant lawns, expanding far and wide,  
The groves, the vales, that fringe the crystal tide,  
The distant forests, piled along the sky,  
Majestic oaks, in opening vistas nigh,  
The wooded highlands, capt with granite towers,  
The gushing fountains, wildering greenwood bowers  
Around the dwelling,—ever please the eye  
With rural Nature's rich variety.  
And in that mansion—in the library hall,  
Where old engravings crown the faded wall,  
Where books and paintings, pebbles rare, and flowers,  
Betray the ramblings far, the well-spent hours—

ELFIORA sits alone. This spring-like day  
She seems amused with some old English lay ;  
But now, attracted to the window nigh,  
She looks intently on the clearing sky—  
On white-blue mist just mantling o'er the vale,  
On dazzling dewdrops loosed by breeze nor gale,  
On river sparkling, as it passed in view,  
With stars the sunlight o'er its surface threw,  
And, roused and listening, every feature flush'd,  
Her joyous thoughts in fervent language gush'd :  
“O brilliant hour ! enrapturing morn !  
Upon thy fragrant airs are sweetly borne  
Birds' warbling melodies ; and, soft and clear,  
The purling of the fountain greets my ear.  
Ye little fragments of a broken storm  
That pass along the sky, and, changing, form  
A thousand shapes that catch the burning ray,  
And shining, silver-fringed, float far away !

Oh, see ye not yourselves in yonder stream  
Now mirrored bright in morning's hallowed beam ?  
Those placid waters image back the sky,  
The beetling crags, the deep-green laurels nigh ;  
And this dark forest, now in sombre gloom,  
Which is to me more dear than gay saloon,  
Unrivalled beauties paint its vernal shades,  
Wave o'er the cliffs, and deck its sunless glades,  
Invite the weary to its peaceful groves,  
Instruct the curious and the sad compose.  
Though ever lovely, I rejoice to see  
Its wildwood blossoms bloom once more for me."

## III.

'Twas thus ELFLORA spoke ; then from the door  
She lightly stepped, array'd to seek the shore.  
The lawn she cross'd, the craggy steep descends,  
Through laurel winds, and treads the deepening glens

Where towering oak and lofty ash unite  
Their clouding limbs that half exclude the light—  
Where wary huntsmen find their noblest game—  
Where prowling wolf and wild deer oft are slain,  
She wanders on, delighted thus to roam  
Through rugged Nature far from friends and home.  
She reach'd at last a lone and blest retreat,  
A favorite grove, adorn'd by rustic seat,  
By blooming rose and vine transplanted there  
With taste, that left unchanged its rural air.  
The wild clematis twined its whitening globes,  
The opening violets spread their purple robes,  
The drooping bowers, the vines that clustering hung  
Thick wreaths of tendrils pendent boughs among,  
And beech and deep-green cedar, wide display'd  
In sombre arches, cast around dark shade  
So dense the day-beams there but faintly shone,  
Mild tinging leaves by other seasons strown.

A foaming stream, that in its blithesome play  
Like night-stars dazzled as it dash'd away,  
Refresh'd the grove, enlivening every bloom,  
And, gently whispering, broke the silent gloom.

## IV.

The maiden sat, in loosen'd robes attired,  
Her features flush'd, her youthful beauty fired.  
The fix'd and changeless gaze her looks disclose,  
The pensive mood, the posture of repose,  
The eye upraised, the pleasant, cloudless smile,  
Almost reveal the thoughts her hours beguile.  
What manly form, advancing, cross'd the glade ?  
His careless steps these quiet scenes invade ;  
Abruptly turning, with unerring eye  
Finds the grove-path and treads it hurriedly.  
His handsome features and the noble air,  
The mental beauty brightly written there,

His light and lofty bearing, and his dress  
In unison with all his looks express,  
Proveth, as far as outward sign will show,  
That youth hath seldom warr'd with toil or woe.  
Kindly received, and standing by her side,  
To hurried question he had scarce replied  
In guarded language, ere the gentle maid  
A strange unquiet in her looks betrayed.  
The rose, the color, from her features fled,  
A fearful paleness o'er her beauty spread,  
Too like the snows a north cold blast will fling  
O'er blossoms rich, the first young bloom of Spring.  
Impatiently she gazed above, around,  
The swaying trees now wake a startling sound.  
Another steadfast and more searching glance  
Calm and convince her that no foes advance,  
And yet how low she breathes each whispered word,  
As if perchance her language might be heard!—

“Can it *be* true, and not an idle tale,  
That he hath come—hath even made this vale  
His home and shelter, his secure retreat—  
And blasted honor hath declined to meet?”  
“His person, ay, his deeds,” replied the youth,  
“Are known too well, and that may be the truth.  
Last eve a huntsman, passing noiseless here,  
Beheld a being, and approached so near,  
Though moonlight only, he observed him well,  
And knew the man: he says it was MARCEL!”  
“Kind language, CLIFTON, for a friendless ear!  
And uttered, doubtless, to augment my fear;  
And would, indeed, could I those words believe;  
But human vision objects may deceive  
At night, when shadows so perplex the eye  
That one well known might pass, if silent, by.  
Did he accost him?”—“No; he only saw  
The darken’d outlines of the wild outlaw.

Who that hath seen him could forget his form,  
His pallid features, and his eye of scorn  
That brooks no equal, and reverts its gaze  
When friendship, greeting, but a smile displays?  
Though true that two long years have pass'd away  
Since he left here in foreign lands to stay,  
Deem not such love as he reveal'd to thee  
Could leave you always undisturb'd near me."

## V.

ELFLORA shuddered, and in thoughtful gaze  
Recall'd to view the scenes of other days,  
Before her beauty far was famed or known,  
When none but MARCEL sought her highland home,  
And felt the fulness of that quenchless fire  
Which lives consuming, though all hopes expire—  
When her dear father, with prophetic care,  
Had marked the youth and bid his child beware;



With anxious pathos breathed it in his prayer,  
Then passed away. His words live keenly there.  
In silent anguish mourn the fatal hour  
Thy beauty's artless art displayed such power !  
Keen be thy sorrow, pure and lonely one !  
To parent's will thy mind could not succumb.

## VI.

" I blame not others," she at last replied ;  
" The imprudence mine, whatever ills betide.  
So unsuspecting in my younger days,  
I deemed him worthy, spoke of him with praise,  
Accepted favors, and with him alone  
In pathless forests rambled far from home,  
And, playful, artless, leaned upon his arm.  
That kindness, I presume, did all the harm.  
Though social with him, *familiar*? NEVER !  
I cherish'd only what my will could sever—

A childish friendship, form'd in foolish pride,  
Pleased with devotion, careless if denied,  
Coldness toward me, a smile to others near,  
Disturb'd me not, nor caused a sigh nor tear.

(O hallowed moments in life's golden spring !

And, now remembered, mournful sadness bring.)

At last faint whispers, startling, met my ear  
Of deeds unmanly in MARCEL's career.  
Instant, with firmness, I repulsed him then,  
Nor him would see, nor sentence from his pen.  
And yet, reluctant to believe him base,  
Our worthy pastor tried all means to trace,  
At my request, that censure to its source,  
But failed, nor found in him the least remorse.  
So always cautious, so composed with man,  
No looks betray him ; and, howe'er you scan  
His marble visage, none can truly tell  
Its thoughtful import, or be calm so well

When prying converse, artful in its aim,  
The dark suspicion mingles with his name."

## VII.

"Dwell not," said CLIFTON, "on a theme to thee  
So fraught with sadness, and so scorned by me ;  
The leafless Winter, with its frozen sky  
Of lowering clouds, and tempests howling by,  
Hath passed away, and blooming Spring once more  
With life and verdure decks the landscape o'er.  
Like it, ELFLORA, rouse thy joyous mind,  
What can be hopeless to a heart resigned  
And sternly trustful ? Future days shall bring  
To thee a calmness—ay, an inward Spring.  
The little violet, nestling on the rock,  
Will bloom secure when forests feel the shock  
Of strong tornadoes, and their giant frames  
In shattered fragments strew unshaded plains ;

Its form so fragile will outlive the storm,  
And for that shelter long those cliffs adorn.  
Come, the violet imitate, and bless my home,  
My pleasant mansion, now, alas! too lone,  
And ever will be till thine eye and smile  
Illume its halls and all my hours beguile.  
Give me the right to sympathize with thee  
In sickness and in sorrow, and to be  
Thy solace in all trying scenes of life,  
Thy dearest shield in MARCEL'S subtle strife;  
And thou shalt be, in all our walks of joy,  
A happy child, and I thy darling boy."  
A moment coloring, she returned his gaze,  
That steady look a sincere love betrays;  
That glance, peculiar to her own dark eye,  
Most eloquent, proclaimed her heart's reply;  
Through loosened ringlets, clustering round her face,  
A grateful tear the ardent youth could trace,

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And, half caressing as he clasped her hand,  
He seemed by gratitude almost unmanned.

## VIII.

"Ills come with time," said he, "then why delay  
Our promised union till some distant day?  
The threatened danger that enthralls thee now  
Argues this eve should consummate thy vow.  
To-night, with HOWARD, I will seek thy home;  
Our reverend sire shall witness it alone."  
"To-night? to-night?" exclaimed the startled maid.  
"An only parent claims my love, my aid;  
Our union now she firmly would oppose;  
I know her thoughts; thy wish must not disclose.  
'Twould pain her feelings, agonize her mind,  
Pour fire on wounds my love, my words, should bind.  
Yet thou art favored; only wait, I pray,  
For her dear sake, a more propitious day.

Peaceful while single—death if e'er I wed,  
Was EDWARD's threat: that threat is now her dread."

"Never," said CLIFTON, "will the villain dare  
To mar a happiness he cannot share.

• This eve our nuptials must take place ; and now  
I ask but this, thy sanction to that vow ;  
And trust my wisdom to arrange a plan  
That none shall know except the holy man.  
Rememberest thou the old majestic ash  
Whose boughs were shivered by the lightning's flash,  
And standing now in ruins, lonely, high,  
With dead-leafed arms outstretched across the sky ?  
To-night in secret to that shelter come ;  
A moon will fill the heavens when day is done ;  
Our pastor's quiet home thou knowest is near,  
And he will welcome us with friendly cheer.  
His aid and service we can always claim ;  
The marriage from the world he will retain."

## IX.

Pleasing to themselves, all Nature pleasing,  
ELFLORA and her friend the shades are leaving,  
The sunless grove, no living object near  
Save songsters chattering to each loved compeer—  
The wren, the jay, the brownly-spotted thrush,  
The warblers dyed like evening's parting flush—  
Enliven still Seclusion's favorite place,  
Some twittering joyous ; others gayly chase  
Their little comrades on from limb to limb,  
Or through the air, vociferous, lightly skim,  
Till life and love, re-echoed, fill the wood  
Which man miscalls a lonely solitude.  
But mark ! the birds are dashing far and fleet,  
The leaves, the air, with rapid wings they beat,  
And skyward soar affrighted wildly, shriek.  
What being roused them in that calm retreat ?

In creviced rock who dare, leaf-shrouded, lay,  
Like warrior armed, perchance prepared to slay?  
Can it be true? It is indeed MARCEL  
Who rises there, where naught of ill should dwell.  
His haughty features, broadening to a sneer,  
Disclose a spirit warped by wild career,  
Maddened by love, by disappointment scarred,  
Hardened by crime, by midnight revel marred.  
His kindling wrath repulsive looks enhance  
To grimness stern, as scornful scowls his glance,  
As muttered words reveal the sullen joy  
The purposed vengeance which his thoughts employ:  
"I too remember the majestic ash  
Shattered and shivered by the lightning's flash,  
And by that Power, by Heaven, I swear  
To-night, poor orphan, I will meet you there—  
By subtle arts, if not by merit, gain  
Your heart and hand, perhaps your wealth obtain;



And while your soul, incarnate, deigns to be,  
No human might shall wrench your form from me.  
But come, come, evening ; passion's storm, sleep calm ;  
Triumphant conquest soon shall bring me balm ;  
My plan, projected to ensnare the maid,  
Though baffled now, the coming night will aid."  
He ceased, and like the silent, single cloud  
Which flings o'er heaven's blue its blackening shroud,  
Passed down the glen, and slowly moves away,  
And in that wood there seems a brighter day.

## X.

ELFLORA's mansion stands in quietude ;  
No foes disturb, no noisy guests intrude ;  
The windows, raised, admit the shine of day,  
And glass and massive carved-work catch the ray,  
Reflect it o'er the walls, diffuse, unite,  
Till all the room with yellow beams is light.

The opening rosebuds, late arranged with care,  
And watered fresh, with fragrance fill the air,  
And, scattering sweetness, woo the wandering bees,  
Which come, and, pilfering, wave those tiny trees  
Like gentle zephyrs ; and that motion's all  
Which stirs within the maiden's lonely hall.  
Once more she comes, and noiseless crossed the room,  
A moment viewed the buds' unfolding bloom,  
A moment grasped a favorite volume nigh,  
Fluttered its leaves, then tossed the treasure by ;  
Then seized a crayon, plucked a pencilled rose  
She partly shaded ere last eve's repose,  
Contracts her brow, and bending fixed her look ;  
But dropped the gem, no quietude could brook.  
Her thoughts were music, floating fast and free,  
Wild warbling forth in tenderest melody.  
But, hark ! A voice hath breathed ELFLORA'S name.  
How sudden still, how marble-like, that frame !

A pure regard, a troubled, anxious air,  
And pale solicitude's expression there ;  
Now, winged by love, her steps to chamber glide,  
And kneels her by an aged mother's side.  
O youth ! how envied in thy heart's career  
When words shall greet thee half as fond and dear  
As those sweet breathings of that filial maid  
Which to her parent warmly proffered aid !  
That parent ! Oh behold her faded eye  
Suffused with tears, affection's mute reply,  
And hand, slight trembling, on her daughter's hair  
In kind approval of her pious care !  
Those features, furrowed by the lapse of time,  
Show youthful sweetness now in deep decline ;  
So light and gently fell the power of years  
That only in her form their force appears.  
What hallowed fortune blessed her troubled day  
To feel not weary as it passed away ?

Love, ever constant, from her only child,  
Her sorrows soothed and all her cares beguiled,  
And made her happy. Though almost alone,  
A calm contentment always marks her home,  
In close communion with one spotless heart  
Has peace no other ties could e'er impart.

## XI.

"My child, a pure and deep regard for thee  
Solicits care. My mind, from fears not free,  
Dwells painful on a troubled slumber's dream.  
And oh how awful, how confused, that scene!  
Strange sounds, strange voices, broke upon my ear;  
Beings unknown, but oh not thou, wert here.  
I called thy name, I watched the opening door;  
Others then entered, but thou cam'st no more.  
How still, how lonely, everything appears!  
Now speak, my child; can these be idle fears?"

Tell me thou wilt not leave me here alone ;  
Forego thy visit, and this night at home  
Remain with me, my only cherished dear ;  
But two days since the HOWARDS all were here.  
What cause, what motive, can impel thy mind,  
When I against it am so much inclined ?”  
“ My dearest mother, grieve not thus ; we know  
Consent thou gavest scarce one hour ago.  
The dreamy slumber of this afternoon  
Should not, dear mother, fill thy heart with gloom.  
All dreams are shadows, to thee however bad,  
And life without them brings enough that's sad.  
How short thy slumber ! See, the cloudless sun  
Is shining here as when thy rest begun ;  
Be tranquil now, and court more sweet repose,  
And I will watch till sleep thine eyelids close.  
Rest is essential to thy weary mind ;  
Composure calm will make thee more resigned.”

“My own, my daughter, thou hast ne’er before  
Beyond my slightest wish e’er ventured more.  
So kind and gentle, every act and prayer  
Seemed interested in thy mother’s care ;  
Yet now my vital welfare claims regard ;  
My counsel canst thou thus this day discard ?”  
ELFLORA listened with profound regret ;  
In tones of mild and soothing language met  
The prudent doubts maternal fondness gave,  
And tried by every means her fears to waive.  
And yet she told not of that nuptial deed  
The night would witness should her hopes succeed ;  
But tenderly with love, and doubly kind,  
And to her wish appearing all resign’d,  
With woman’s tact and art she gently drew  
A full consent to all she wished to do ;  
Except the marriage, which *must not* be known  
Beyond the study of her pastor’s home.

## CANTO THE SECOND.

### I.

WHILE yonder sun illumes with level ray,  
While robes of gold the grand old hills display,  
The shadows lengthening on the plains extend,  
The cooler airs with day diffusely blend,  
The towering clouds in crimson mountains rise,  
And, 'sembling Etnas, flame one half the skies.  
But now they change, the shifting vapors fade ;  
O'er all the landscape fast descends their shade ;  
A moment sparkling gleams the setting sun,  
And sinking now, the halcyon day is done.  
The stars are brightening in the blue above,  
And beautify the walks endeared to love ;  
The songs are hushed ; the vales and hills in view,  
By evening shadowed, pale their verdant hue ;

The air, reposing, yields its ardent light,  
The full-orbed moon in glory forms the night.

## II.

Through pathless fields, by faithful woodman led,  
By branching thorn, by wild-rose thickly spread,  
By cliffs and scattered rocks, o'er whispering rills,  
By fragrant groves, that gloom the silent hills,  
Now turning, and now bending to evade  
The drooping limbs 'neath which her childhood played,  
ELFLORA reached the plain, and saw the tree,  
Dark, standing lone like sail-reefed ship at sea.  
The feeble outlines of a human form  
Cast a pale figure far across the lawn,  
And moving stealthy, sheltered in the shade  
The huge trunk in silver moonlight made.  
The bride beheld it, and with waving hand  
And gentle whisper, stern though sweetly bland,



Dismissed her guidesman, and pursued her way  
Athwart the plain, whose paths seemed lit by day,  
So bright the verdure that around her lay,  
So cloudless clear the orb's refulgent ray.  
Now on that person whom the light revealed,  
But whose disguise a cunning foe concealed,  
She leans reposing, and her quiet air  
Betrays no fear that CLIFTON is not there.  
And they are silent, moving toward the wood;  
But why—why looks she not where late they stood?  
Confiding innocent! mistrustless one!  
Believing all her sorrows nearly done,  
Lightly and buoyant down the sloping way  
She glides like snow that falls on fire to lay.

## III.

The forest verge is gained, and hidden now  
By shadows flung from many a massive bough,

They pause. MARCEL kneels down with searching eye,  
Anxious to scrutinize all objects nigh ;  
A figure, CLIFTON-like, is dimly seen,  
Approaching fast where they had lately been—  
Not recognized, but moving in faint view  
Between him and the pale horizon's hue.  
He fancied that dark form can only be  
The one from whom it would be wise to flee,  
And caught the maiden's arm to lead her on,  
Sought the dense shades, and noiseless passed along,  
Till now through tangled wood he wends their course,  
Down a steep bluff, through rustling brambles force,  
Sliding, sustained by limbs and shrubs around,  
Some bending breakless, some uproot the ground,  
Endangering by the worthless aid they lend,  
Like counsel false obtained from faithless friend.  
Stern Nature's gloomy castles now are near,  
Cliffs, grandly towering above cliffs, appear,

With laurel interspersed, and pillared firm  
By giant trees ; the vine and woodland fern  
Spring greenly there amidst the grayer moss,  
And wreathed in folds the massive crags emboss.  
Once more they paused. A cavern's secret door  
Is seen, when logs and stone that closed it o'er  
MARCEL removed, and part exposed to view,  
In rock, the dismal entrance riven through.  
ELFLORA, trembling, instant turned aside,  
Averse to enter e'en with favorite guide ;  
And when he urged her on against her will,  
She felt through every nerve a shuddering chill,  
And backward stept, alone some course to take,  
And gazed to see what thence might be her fate.  
While undecided still her guide led on ;  
She sighed, and, yielding, followed, and they're gone  
In the dark cave which penetrates the hill.  
Now rough, now smooth their walk ; they stand ; all's still.

Then through the cavern instant flashed a light,  
And MARCEL's features burst upon her sight.  
Wildly she shrieked, and fell, but, falling, found  
An arm of strength entwined her waist around,  
And laid her lightly on a pallet near  
Of otter furs outspread on skins of deer.

## IV.

The youth a moment stood, then turned away,  
And left the maiden ; motionless she lay,  
Not breathing, or so gently that her breath  
Scarce told that fearful stillness was not death.  
But soon life's fountain redly flushed again ;  
The lips and features moved ; some color came ;  
And, slowly rising, now a single hand  
Supports that frame almost too shocked to stand.  
Surprised, bewildered, far around she gazed.  
What is that scene that thus perplex'd, amazed ?

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The torch refulgent sheds a golden light,  
On every object gleams intensely bright,  
And pictures forth the aisle, the dome, the shrine,  
Their cast of grandeur, every carved outline,  
And pillared halls whose lofty roof o'ershrouds  
With gorgeous arches, 'sembling silver'd clouds  
Of massive volume seen in summer sky,  
When piled in banks the radiant vapors lie ;  
The curtains rich, while in their breezy flow  
Seem changed to stone and hang like drifts of snow,  
Reflecting broad, in star-like lustre there,  
The flame, whose brightness glows beside the fair.  
The spacious cavern high and far extends,  
And where yon hall the light with darkness blends,  
Columns on columns, rising, faintly loom,  
Dimly discerned amidst the dusky gloom.  
But different to ELFLORA's startled view  
Those objects seem—of lifelike form and hue.

MARCEL she deemed was there, and when she saw  
Him thus disguised, and every wild outlaw  
That followed him, and form'd his reckless band,  
And ghost-like glimmering, and around him stand,  
No CLIFTON there, and no chivalric arm  
Near to protect, and proud to shield her form,  
Tears came, and language of despair intrude,  
Which proved her firmness more than half subdued.

## V.

A sounding tread now echo'd in the rear,  
And from without, advancing fast and near,  
The villain comes ; surprised, the maiden sees  
No demon frowns, but smiles awaked to please.  
"Fear not," said he ; "though in this lonely cave,  
Thou hast a soul to make MARCEL thy slave.  
I brought thee hither, anxious to reveal  
One truth my heart, though iron, must ever feel.

Behold my features ! Ay, look on me now :  
My callous feelings cloud my youthful brow.  
Despised and spurn'd by one I deem'd my friend,  
Reckless of life and careless of my end,  
A slander'd victim, sentenced though unheard,  
And thou—how faithless !—ne'er repelled that word.  
I am no villain, am not even bad,  
And comrades vile—great God !—I never had ;  
So, pure in thought, I am prepared to die ;  
Yet this to thee, thy friends will dare deny ;  
They have o'erreach'd me, have estranged thy heart ;  
But sleepless cunning now unfolds her art,  
For thou art captive, and thy friends shall hear  
The shout of conquest and behold my sneer !”  
At this ELFLORA, with indignant pride,  
And rising full, with frowning glance replied :  
“ MARCEL, that language, breathed to give me pain,  
Forbear, ungrateful ! Do I merit blame ?

Do not my feelings, all my actions, show  
A sister's sorrow ? Darest thou answer, ' No ' ?  
If that be fiction once against thee hurled,  
With truth, poor coward, undeceive the world ;  
Retrieve thy honor ; prove thy motives pure ;  
Assume that station talents can secure,  
And teach mankind one noble lesson yet—  
Thy clouded star shall not in darkness set.  
Away with folly ! cease of love to dream !  
Thy name, dishonor'd, go, once more redeem."

## VI.

" ELFLORA, *dearest* (frown not at the word ;  
Thou shalt be mine, the time not long deferr'd),  
However glorious, however grand,  
To wake the soul and bid it proudly stand  
Among the immortals ever known,  
A god in mind that time can ne'er dethrone,



All would be naught, a nothingness, to me,  
A lifeless chaos, if unblest by thee.  
The dark-eyed daughters of chivalric Spain,  
And all of Grecia's honor'd old domain,  
The maidens of Italia's rosy land,  
The dames who tread Circassia's lofty strand,  
The noble Briton, and the Frank less free,  
Whose stars of beauty burn beyond the sea,  
Do not possess, in form nor earthly shrine,  
A soul whose flashes lighten brows like thine."

## VII.

"Enough! enough! for all that thou canst say,"  
Exclaim'd the maiden as she turned away,  
"Shall not avail thee, never change my mind,  
Though servile praises be with force combined.  
I do disdain thee, and I fear thee not;  
I scorn thy homage, I despise this plot.

Stand back! hands off! I am not in thy power!

Alone I am not in this trying hour.

In God I trust: I know that he is *here*,

And will protect me if I have no fear;

For ever paralyzed that hand shall be

If laid with passion's dark intent on me."

#### VIII.

The villain paled, then slowly paced the room,

Now near the light, and now in distant gloom,

And, frowning sullen, gazed upon the floor,

The haughty maiden, and the cavern-door,

As though his feelings held wild war within,

Now swayed by terror, now beguiled by sin.

While thus his passions jarr'd in deep contrive,

He left the prisoner, buried, yet alive;

But, pausing, closed the cave with artful care,

Then gazed till satisfied no spy was there;

Then, muttering to himself, he forced his way  
In that straight course he knew her mansion lay.  
Short was the time till on his eager view  
Light fill'd the windows, brighten'd, then withdrew,  
As though the inmates pass'd from room to room  
With all that hurry caused by mental gloom.  
Near now, and almost there, he plainly saw  
They talk'd perchance of him, the wild outlaw ;  
He reck'd not what they said, but boldly sprung  
Up the old steps and stood that crowd among,  
Which widen'd speechless, and with steady eye  
Watch'd his, that flash'd a moment to defy,  
Then gather'd quickly to a smile of scorn,  
Which proved at once with whom the bride had gone.  
Soon round the culprit press'd the closing crowd,  
And silence broke in voices censuring loud,  
And, waking justice roused in every breast,  
They soon, with iron hands his form arrest,

With cords immediate tensely bind each limb,  
With prudent forethought weapons wrest from him,  
And, over-cautious, as they pass'd him by,  
Kept a close watch upon his hand and eye,  
And barr'd the doors and closed the shutters to,  
Lest his associates might the broil renew.  
So strange, so startling, all his late career,  
So wrapt in mystery, so involved the sphere  
In which he triumph'd since exiled from home,  
That wild conjecture filled the void unknown,  
And whisper'd ominous to condemn MARCEL :  
“ Behold his forehead, gash'd by sword or shell,  
And mark his bearing, watch his kindling eye,  
When cannon-thunder booms along the sky.”

## IX.

The prostrate captive, though disarm'd and bound,  
Now raised his eye and quiet gazed around,

Until his searching glance met CLIFTON's; then  
A shout and laugh which shock'd the crowd of men  
Broke from his lip, and told at last too well  
No threats could conquer and no arm could quell,  
Unless they silenced him by sudden death,  
Or stifled with strong hand his venom'd breath.  
"You have my weapons," then he coolly said;  
"Now stab my heart or shoot me through the head;  
Commit at once the wished-for homicide.  
Why stand reluctant? Can it kill the bride?  
Ay, dare to do it! She shall feel the blow,  
For where she slumbers you shall never know.  
She is imprisoned in a secret cave  
Where not a hand but mine her life can save;  
No food to nourish, and no water near,  
She dies if these mean cords detain me here.  
But not unconscious will she yield her breath:  
Old Time, remorseless, shall behold stern Death

Deep waste her form and wear her strength away,  
Till 'feebled Nature scarce hath power to pray ;  
Then loathsome vermin will from creviced wall  
Steal forth, and coldly o'er her features crawl,  
And she shall feel them, try to scare in vain ;  
They undisturbed will stay, and, gnawing, pain.  
Unloose me now, or by that cave I swear  
As now she shall remain, shall perish there !"

## X.

The pause which followed open'd to the ear  
Deep groans of anguish in the chamber near,  
So rending to the heart all rush'd within  
And saw the ruin wrought by giant Sin.  
They loosed MARCEL, and, holding, brought him nigh ;  
That sight which fill'd with tears each manly eye  
He coldly gazed upon, perchance with hate,  
Believing she half caused his gloomy fate.

Raised on her couch by those who near her stand,  
The feeble being stretched her fleshless hand  
And grasped MARCEL's, and, trembling, mildly said,  
"Can this be thee? is all thy virtue fled?  
Oh no, it is not. Give me back my child!  
Oh, EDWARD! is thy *manhood* all exiled?  
Too often thou hast seen her soothing care,  
How dear she was, how warmly she would share  
The little toils my daily comforts ask  
From those who deem'd their watch a weary task;  
Night after night, all-anxious, near me stay  
When servants, coldly kind, would steal away,  
Regardless of their charge, and only come  
When gentler hands their little rites had done.  
It seems but yesterday—dear happy hours!—  
Her infant form in grove and garden-bowers  
Play'd round me, artless, wild with joyous glee,  
Careless of all care, from every sorrow free,

Till all at once my little infant grew  
The guardian angel hopeful Fancy drew.  
And must I lose her now? is such pure worth  
Rewarded only by the thorns of earth?  
Be generous, please! I ask it with a prayer,  
And bless the hand that will my daughter spare."

## XI.

In thoughtful silence MARCEL turned aside,  
And from the chamber stept with humbled pride,  
And by a window sat, and propp'd his hand  
Against his brow, whilst others, gazing, stand.  
Then HOWARD, keenly anxious to restrain  
The storm of passion and the bride regain,  
Now spoke so kindly to that shattered heart,  
In tones meek goodness only can impart,  
That he was summoned to be seated nigh  
By meaning glance of EDWARD's shaded eye.



"My friend and pastor," then replied MARCEL,  
"Thy words revive me ; thou hast counselled well.  
Now to ELFLORA come, and feel no fear ;  
By daylight, I presume, she can be here.  
It is her wish, to-night, to have thee there,  
And I alone to her must not repair.  
Do not, I pray, decline her last appeal  
When life demands it ; this thou canst but feel.  
I must acknowledge that I could not see  
ELFLORA's parent when she gazed on me,  
But my poor mother rose before my eye  
In that last sleep in which I saw her die.  
It hath unmanned me, hath so chilled my frame  
A deathlike faintness now unnerves my brain.  
I ask one moment of my early years ;  
My deep-wrought feelings need relief in tears,  
But they refuse my heart that calm repose  
So pure, so grateful, when the tear-drop flows."

He ceased, and rose to leave and lead the way,  
But voice imploring now prolongs his stay,  
Called to the chamber ; HOWARD stands alone,  
With CLIFTON near him, who in whispered tone  
Talk of the danger of their absent friend,  
And offer plans that might perchance extend  
Relief, though transient, till the early dawn  
Revealed to them the course the bride had gone.  
“What fatal rashness,” then the pastor said,  
“To be by him to that lone cavern led !  
For well I understand his dark design ;  
But wisdom may suggest to not decline ;  
There might some unexpected means arise,  
Some unforeseen event, to aid surprise.  
Perhaps, like huntsmen, I could mark the track ;  
A limb snapped here and there, while wandering back  
Among the leaves would whiten in the sun,  
And you that splintered path might find, and come.”

Then CLIFTON answer'd, " Do, my noble friend,  
Accompany thus ; by every means extend  
Relief and comfort to that spotless love,  
And soon as morning dawns yon hills above  
I'll rush to save you, search and find the cave,  
With strong associates, comrades true and brave."  
The hall with others EDWARD enter'd now ;  
Some change seem'd wrought upon his iron brow ;  
But, whispering sternly in his rival's ear,  
He utter'd words that HOWARD must not hear :  
" Return my weapons ! Dare to watch my path,  
The bride shall famish, you shall feel my wrath."

## XII.

The purest hopes induced the aged sire  
The offer to accept ; while they retire  
Despair and sorrow paint with deeper gloom  
The looks of those who linger in that room,

Inactive, cautious, lest they might defeat  
By steps imprudent plans with risks replete.  
One spoke regretful that they did not slay,  
Or keep the culprit firmly chain'd till day,  
And boldly promised to uproot the wilds,  
The hills and valleys, and all deep defiles,  
But he would find her, and securely save  
From demon hands, and bear her from the cave.

Others, excited less, made calm reply :

“ While that was being done the bride would die.”

“ Then why not force the robber to reveal

The place by burning brand or bleeding steel ?

His poniard's point I would have gently prest,

Then harder, still more hard, against his breast,

And threaten'd to the hilt to plunge the blade ;

We might, all doubtless, thus have gained the maid.”

But one acquainted long with stern MARCEL,

Said, “ Mildness, and not force, can only quell.”

While thus too loudly flow'd each useless word,  
Within the chamber dying groans were heard,  
And those who coldly watch'd the glazing eye  
Whisper, " Ere dawns the day, think not she'll die?"



## CANTO THE THIRD.

### I.

ONCE more we leave the mansion and its guests,  
And in that cave in which ELFLORA rests  
Behold her prostrate, slumbering, all alone,  
Her hair neglected, furs half round her thrown,  
The tears undried, the frowning features pale,  
The wreck of dreams—the dreams that still prevail.  
The lips, slow moving, mark a troubled sleep,  
She sighs, again is wrapt in slumbers deep,  
And now more loud, more heavy, breathing makes,  
And now, in one convulsive start, awakes,  
Looks round her with a wild, distracted air,  
A moment silent, and then kneels in prayer,  
While o'er her forehead droop dark locks of hair.

Her trustful language, breathed in mellow'd tone,  
Falls not unheard ; she is not now alone :  
Unnoticed by ELFLORA, softly come  
Her friends, now resting till the prayer is done.

## II.

The maiden rose, and dried the grateful tear  
Which fill'd her eye, and gazed, but not with fear,  
Upon those forms approaching near her now,  
Though one had malice stamp'd upon his brow.  
Her lofty spirit had resign'd its fate,  
And stood serenely calm'd, resolved to wait  
With unchanged mind the dark, uncertain doom,  
Which hope, though nightless, scarcely could illumine.  
One glance of kindness on her friend she threw,  
But in that look no smile beam'd forth to view ;  
The settled stillness of her feeling heart  
To features snowy pale no gleams impart

Of that warm welcome which in early days  
Oft wing'd her step along the flowery ways,  
When in the forest she beheld his form  
Coming like sunlight through an evening storm.

## III.

With sullen calmness, glancing at the bride,  
MARCEL in silence proudly by her side  
Now placed himself, and grasp'd her trembling hand,  
And cool, though earnest, issued his command  
To HOWARD, standing mute in meekness by,  
But who the mandate heard without reply.  
• My friend," said he, "I brought thee here to-night  
With honest intent and a sense of right,  
That by thine office thou may'st end the strife  
Which threatens now an aged parent's life.  
Now, marry us at once, and legally too ;  
Speak out ! do quickly what thou hast to do !



Or *die* in darkness, starved within this cave,  
And all alone, where not a hand can save,  
Where all thy time untold shall pass away,  
Where never more shalt thou behold the day.  
The task is easy ; what we both require,  
This reconciling act, is her desire ;  
This sacrifice she is prepared to make,  
This very hour, for her dear mother's sake.—  
Silence, ELFLORA ! Wilt thou dare decline ?  
What must be *must be*, and thou shalt be mine !  
When we are married, and from CLIFTON free,  
A model husband I intend to be.”  
The youth, resolving that the nuptial rite  
Should be accomplish'd ere the short-lived night  
Could lift its mantle and reveal the den  
To search untiring of relentless men,  
Now aimed his weapon at the pastor's breast,  
And, grimly frowning, urged his dark request

With such wild gestures, such o'erwhelming scorn,  
Few could withstand it or live out the storm.  
Yet HOWARD was calm ; the mildness seen before  
The aged pastor's prayerful features wore  
As he, unconscious, seemed to pass away  
In thought and spirit to those realms of day  
Where saints are resting, and where never cease  
That life whose pastime mars no holy peace.  
The bride, with eye on his, hath inly caught  
The inspiring tone his trustful feelings wrought,  
And stands unshaken, with an air and mien  
Of stern composure equal to the scene,  
And loosed at once the hand that held her arm,  
And lean'd, though lightly, on her pastor's form.  
Once more the ruffian, roused to foaming wrath,  
Satanic fury hurls 'round Beauty's path ;  
Yet, undisturb'd, the maiden dared to smile,  
Sustain'd by steadfast faith against his guile.

The villain, trembling, now approach'd more near ;  
His arms re-priming to excite their fear,  
A moment on them drew unerring aim,  
Then, sharply wheeling, at the torchlight flame  
Discharged the weapon, and the shatter'd fire  
To cinders flash'd ; and as the sparks expire  
A sudden darkness, deeper than the gloom  
Of midnight tempests when there shines no moon,  
Pervades the cavern, render'd doubly drear  
By echoes far roll'd back from echoes near,  
Like bolts of thunder shaking Summer's sky,  
Or crash of woods when winds are howling by.

## IV.

MARCEL advanced and clasp'd around the waist  
The startled beauty, and with caution traced  
Those gloomy chambers to the distant door,  
And moved so noiseless as the bride he bore,

Emerging outward, that the aged sire  
All guidance lost as fast their steps retire,  
And he remains immured within the cave—  
His home in future, soon perchance his grave.  
And now the cavern firmly once again  
Is closed; unopened it may long remain.  
And this MARCEL accomplished with a care  
That filled ELFLORA's heart with wild despair.  
Once more his arm encircled hers with force,  
And downward toward the stream he turns their course,  
Through woods so rugged that the flying deer  
Would pause for shelter there, and feel no fear.  
The boughs above them and the cliffs around,  
The lonely hour, the silence so profound  
(Save the monotonous and constant roar  
The river sent in thunder to the shore),  
Fell on the maiden's heart, and swept away  
A transient moment all the ills of day;

But ever and anon they came in view,  
And left upon her brow an icy dew.  
Yet hope of rescue half sustains the bride,  
And cautious glances cast from side to side  
By him who leads her plainly now reveal  
He fears those riven crags her friends conceal.  
With weapon ready and with noiseless tread,  
With hand on hers, he gently leans his head,  
And, often pausing, with nice care surveys  
Each moving bramble which the light wind sways.  
Old trunks of shatter'd trees, that branchless stood  
Like spectres peering through the darksome wood,  
Proud oaks, prostrate by the power of Time,  
High rocks, grotesque and capped with creeping vine,  
Seem living forms by troubled Fancy's aid  
As scatter'd moonlight fitful on them play'd.  
But, ever watchful, with a steady hand  
To execute his selfish heart's command,

He moves as fearless to the river-shore  
As ever hero Freedom's standard bore,  
Though in the forest, in each darken'd glen,  
His guilty conscience sees unflinching men,  
Whose faithful rifle in the deadly strife  
Leaves nothing living when it aims at life.  
At last in safety on a giant rock  
That turns the stream, nor trembles at the shock,  
They stand, and, speechless, far around survey  
The rough, wild scene, and wilder waters' play,  
For there the Susquehanna rolls along  
A boisterous current, clear yet pouring strong.

## V.

The youth now shoved in view an oarless boat,  
And moor'd it near them, on the surge afloat,  
And instant in it placed the captive bride,  
And to her questions strangely calm replied :

“Thy fate, ELFLORA, who shall ever mark?  
Alone and friendless in this fragile bark,  
I soon shall launch thee on the foaming spray,  
Where none can rescue to entomb thy clay,  
But hungry fish of thee will make their meal  
Ere scarce thy drowning form hath ceased to feel.  
And hast thou courage in this hopeless hour  
Death thus to meet, and yet possess the power  
To change my purpose and establish peace?  
Now pledge thy honor, and this plot shall cease,  
To love me always, or at least to live  
With me as mine, if love thou canst not give.  
Dare to refuse me, I will seek thy home  
When thou art gone, and by false words alone  
Entice young CLIFTON to the secret cave  
Where HOWARD lingers my imprisoned slave,  
And there, redeemless, with thine aged friend  
His joys, his sorrows, and his life shall end.

Thy friendless mother (such she then will be)—  
Ay, now thou tremblest, and perchance may see  
Some sacrifice to her pure love is due  
If thou wouldst not thy hand with blood imbrue.”

## VI.

Her doom the maiden heard with tearless eye,  
And mark'd composure showed in her reply :  
“Peace, peace I will not purchase, nor my life,  
Nor partial freedom, in this shameful strife  
By sacrifice of right, in which I trust,  
When conscience tells me it would not be just.  
This hour have I no friend to rescue me ?  
Look round you, and behold in every tree,  
In every leaf, in every flower that blooms,  
In every atom that the plant consumes,  
In every star, in every ponderous world,  
In every ray of light by suns unfurl'd,



In air, in lightning, in the restless sea,  
God was, and is, and hence shall ever be,  
Owning all space, pervading every sphere;  
And, to my heart, so ever sheltering near.  
MARCEL, my soul is safe : I have no fear ;  
My trust, my faith in God, will save me here.  
If I must perish, if my hour hath come,  
'Tis His high will, not thine, poor wretch ! when done."  
MARCEL, perceiving by her earnest tone,  
Which spoke her feelings more than words had shown,  
How vain, how hopeless, every subtle art  
To win or conquer that unshaken heart,  
Now shoved the vessel, and it dashed away  
Athwart the billows, bounding 'midst the spray,  
Which rocks opposing burst to sparkling foam  
As whirl'd the currents, sidelong swiftly thrown,  
Like gliding serpents wreathing round their path,  
And backward curling with envenom'd wrath.

The skiff that bore her seem'd a shatter'd speck,  
And the wild waters, dark without the wreck,  
Appear'd to bear her fast and far away,  
As she, apparent, prostrate on them lay.  
And as the distance shrouded all from view,  
Save mist and vapors form'd for morning's dew,  
And waving rapids that roll'd madly on,  
The villain, musing, murmur'd, "She is gone!"

## VII.

In restless mood he breathed a heavy sigh,  
With scanning glance surveyed each object nigh,  
Then hastening upward on the hill's incline,  
From rock to rock, with hand from limb to vine,  
From many a pendent branch accepting aid,  
He gained a level crown'd with younger shade,  
Some distance from the fatal scene. And now  
He leaves the forest, feels upon his brow

The zephyr's balm, which swept the fields and bring  
The lavish fragrance shed by rosy Spring.  
Through the bright moonlight, on the flower'd lawn,  
Near the ash tree, appears a moving form  
Engaged intently with a strolling pack  
Of faithful dogs that search for some lost track.  
With step more cautious EDWARD crossed the plain,  
And unperceived upon the huntsman came,  
And seized his arm with such an iron grasp  
That CLIFTON started with a sudden gasp.

## VIII.

"Did I not warn thee, if you sought the cave  
Or dared to watch me, there was naught could save  
The bride from vengeance, should you chance to find  
The place or cavern where she lives enshrined?  
Yet mark this effort: here are dogs that know  
The tread of maiden from her manly foe,

And now may lead you, like some human guide,  
The path, though printless, where I led the bride.  
I see the motive, and the project laid  
That shout or whistle shall bring to your aid  
Intrepid huntsmen, who are even now  
Concealed in numbers on yon wooded brow ;  
I saw them there, and thought that I could trace  
The form or features of some well-known face.  
They did not see me ; nay, and it was well ;  
I might have sent them howling through the dell,  
Or laid them lifeless with my pistol-ball,  
Nor left one witness to record their fall.  
All this is useless, since I come to crave  
That you will join us in the secret cave,  
That we together may adjust our cause,  
And shield my errors from the outraged laws ;  
For which I give thee thy unsullied bride,  
Still spotless pure, still worthy of thy pride.

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But all must pledge me by a solemn oath  
A lasting friendship, that I may in both  
Thyself and pastor find sufficient aid  
The law's stern justice rightly to evade.  
The noble HOWARD, ever meaning well,  
Hath kindly bound him always to repel  
The groundless slanders Envy cast on me,  
And asks all friends to sanction his decree.

## IX.

“Although imprudent, and perchance unwise,  
To credit language which I should despise,  
I will to see them venture in the cave,  
Yet grant no promise such as that you crave  
Before our meeting. And I ought to know  
What cause, what circumstance, hath made my foe  
So very gentle and his words so bland.  
Most certain, something hath thy soul unmanned,

And changed affection for the friendless maid  
To selfish interest since she was betrayed."  
"There is, and thou shalt hear it," said MARCEL.  
"Thou knowest ELFLORA—ay, perchance too well—  
The soothing sweetness of her quiet way ;  
But only rouse her or infringe her sway,  
Provoke her feelings, cross her stubborn will,  
There's not a panther prowling on yon hill  
But I would rather fondle to reclaim  
To gentle loving than that fiery dame.  
If you such creatures can domesticate,  
Come get her, and GOD help thee and thy fate !"

## X.

'Twas nearly day as downward through the wood  
They bent their course, though every object stood  
In all that shadowed loveliness of night  
Which rests on earth when planets all are bright—

When clouds are only scatter'd far and few,  
Making the clear a purer, deeper blue.  
Such was that balmy morn ; the setting moon,  
Half down the west, was near her mountain-tomb ;  
The winds were still, the birds not yet in song,  
And all was silent, as they moved along  
Through forests gilded by the level ray,  
Which slept on leaves and cliffs that walled their way.  
While slow they walked by crags and giant trees,  
There came a sound, so like the whispering breeze  
That none but CLIFTON, haply listening, caught  
The low-breathed murmur, and its meaning sought  
By hurried glance around and through the shade,  
Where Night and Silence seemed in slumber laid.  
And there a form he saw approaching near  
With cautious step, perchance controlled by fear.  
The moon a glory round her features threw  
As she in breathless quiet nearer drew,

And stood so still, so pale, that Death seemed there ;  
Nor corse nor statue ever shone more fair.  
“ Behold that madman !” then exclaimed the bride.  
“ In oarless vessel, on yon river's tide,  
He dared to launch me from the rugged shore,  
The sport of waters, whose uneven floor  
Too well he knows is formed of countless rock,  
That skiff, unmanned, cannot escape their shock.  
Yet God, all potent, turned it in a cove,  
And waved it gently by a pendent grove ;  
I grasped a limb, and slowly dragged the boat  
Where still it lies, half grounded, half afloat,  
On a sand-shore, beneath the eagle's tree ;  
I left it there, and now once more am free !”

## XI.

The villain stood confounded and amazed ;  
His eye to CLIFTON's slow and sullen raised,



But sudden turned him from that lightning gaze,  
As though he caught the sun's unclouded blaze.  
A child, though feeble, now might grasp his hand  
And hold him captive, e'en assume command  
By cautious language o'er that cowering youth,  
So shamed, so withered by the voice of truth,  
His brute-like passions were subdued to sleep ;  
A nerveless tremor o'er him seem'd to creep ;  
An icy moisture gathered on his brow ;  
A woman's mildness might control him now  
With gentle accents, careful to convey  
No word imprudent to prolong the sway.  
But CLIFTON carries his protecting arms  
His dirk, his pistol, have peculiar charms,  
And why not use them 'gainst his mortal foe ?  
He wished to conquer ; why the chance forego ?  
He aimed the weapon at his rival's breast,  
And shouted, " Stand, sir ! I at once arrest !

One single move, one act to rescue, try,  
That very moment, dastard wretch ! you die !  
Kneel at my feet ! Obey ! I bid you kneel,  
Or crashing shot this instant flashing feel !”

## XII.

Like rising tempest lit by sheets of fire,  
The culprit reddened, and the kindling ire  
Curled his proud lip and surged and heaved his frame,  
Till from his features flashed a battle-flame.  
So startling sudden burst his strength in storm  
That CLIFTON scarcely could an act perform  
Before the dagger, threatening, o’er him swung  
The moment that his weapon aimless rung.  
Now breast to breast, and each armed hand to hand,  
They strike and swerver, now advance and stand.  
Each gleaming poniard drips with smoking blood,  
From either bosom spouts the sanguine flood ;

That dash a channel carves across the cheek ;  
The villain bleeds when he essays to speak.  
But now a passage of that practised foe .  
Disarms the other, who but foils each blow  
By Nature's weapons and by manly strength ;  
But, staggering near, his death seems fixed at length.  
' This instant, CLIFTON, seals at last thy doom ;  
To respite thee high Heaven hath no boon,"  
Exclaimed the ruffian as he raised his dirk,  
With passion trembling, to complete the work.  
ELFLORA, where art thou this fearful hour ?  
For safety dost thou seek some hidden bower ?  
Ah no ! She watches with unfaltering eye  
A time to interpose, and, stepping nigh,  
Her shawl she opened, every fold outspread,  
With dauntless courage wrapped the villain's head.  
Down o'er his arms the silken garment droops ;  
His eyes are dark, his hand makes aimless swoops,

And ere his struggles can remove that veil  
A rock's sharp fragment, such as strew the dale,  
Young CLIFTON grasped, and then with fatal aim  
The hooded culprit stretched upon the plain.  
They snatch the cover from his quivering face ;  
He lies so still he seems in Death's embrace.  
Just where the forehead joins his raven hair  
The blood is bubbling and the skull is bare ;  
So wide the gash you may perceive the stone,  
So strongly hurled, hath crashed the solid bone.

## XIII.

The strife's last echo scarce had lull'd away  
Ere three armed huntsmen sprang to join the fray  
From out the forest, and behind their train  
The peaceful HOWARD, hurrying onward, came,  
And hailed them promptly, lest to vengeful deed,  
In their excitement, they should dare proceed.

But all was quiet when he reached the scene,  
And scarce a movement where so late had been  
The wild contention and the strokes for life,  
The clash of weapons, and the knife to knife.  
The ground was crimsoned, and the bloody grass  
Was bruised and matted, crush'd by many a pass  
Of feet now fettered by approaching death,  
Now strongly struggling in the gasp for breath.

#### XIV.

ELFLORA wept, and leaned against the arm  
Of him whose counsel and whose manly form  
Was now essential to sustain her there,  
Her fears to soothe, her painful charge to share.  
She told, though briefly, all that late had passed—  
The launch, the perils, and her walk when cast  
Alone at midnight on the trackless shore—  
And all the trials that she nobly bore

To aid them both, and then to foil MARCEL,  
Whose purpose, threatening, he had dared to  
tell;

And now, self-censured, she expressed remorse  
That all her efforts seemed of death the source.

"Not thine the fault! Oh no, dear faithful bride!  
But love of arms," the sacred sire replied—

"The coward's shield, which virtue casts aside.

Ah me! how often have I warned thy friend

That trust in weapons must in failure end!

What human being could have rescued me

Save EDWARD, whom I could not hope to see?

Who else in time could find that secret cave?

And yet I felt that GOD my life would save.

With strong reliance, with undoubting trust,

That in this life He ne'er forsakes the just,

I sat me down and calm'd to peace my mind,

And to His will with joy my fate resigned;

And then to me was opened exit clear ;  
It is enough that I am safely here.  
And now assistance is by these required,  
Once more this subject, if again desired,  
I will resume when we have less to do ;  
Our friend revives ; his foe seems better too.—  
Kind huntsman, lend thine hand, and with thy aid  
I think this youth, with care, may be conveyed  
To his own dwelling, while we leave the rest  
To wait on MARCEL till his wounds are drest,  
And if not able then to walk or stand,  
They will of course extend a welcome hand  
To bear him home, and then provide with care  
The aid and comfort he may need when there."

## XV.

Assent to this request was made by all,  
And two are left to answer EDWARD's call,

While those with CLIFTON carefully move away,  
Nor mark the actions of the men who stay.  
One grasped a vine and tensely bound each limb,  
The other shook the foe, rough-handling him,  
To see if conscience was enough restored  
To feel the torture which they held in hoard,  
And grimly chuckled to perceive his eye  
By glance and motion gave a mute reply ;  
Then, turning to his comrade, coolly said,  
“ I fear the prisoner will too soon be dead.  
Suppose we lynch him while we know he lives,  
And reap the pleasure vengeance always gives  
To those whose hatred of such evil ways  
Compel the hangman to cut short their days ?  
Could we be censured should we now embark  
His fettered person in the selfsame ark  
In which he placed the unoffending bride ?  
His fate, like hers, *his* god may then decide.”



“Ay, that will do, but now 'tis nearly day ;  
Some one may rescue should he hold his way  
Till sunlight ; therefore shoulder up that side ;  
The burden thus between us we'll divide.  
Hold fast ! grip firmer ! There ! now close your fist—  
The one that's under—and I'll grasp your wrist.  
Ay, now we have him ; if he will not walk,  
His feet may draggle.” Thus drawled in their talk  
While bearing MARCEL roughly through the wood  
To where the vessel, still half grounded, stood.  
The captive raised at last his drooping head,  
Became collected, and with effort said :  
“I know that money hath secured your aid ;  
You bloody scoundrels of the blackest grade !  
Bribed to defame me, you have hourly sought  
My life, my ruin, and ye flinched at naught  
That might accomplish this, his fixed design.  
Ye sons of Judas ! born to rot in crime,

Go, get the wages fiends should blush to hold,  
The blood-stained guineas of his bribing gold,  
And then—then into everlasting fire  
Depart, ye cursed! ye can climb no higher!"

The nettled woodsmen answered in reply  
That all he said was one ungodly lie,  
And they could prove it. But their way was queer:  
They cuffed and shook him till the proof was clear;  
And then, by this time having reached the boat,  
In it they placed him, and when well afloat,  
Let go the vessel as it felt the wave,  
And as the last long shove to it they gave,  
A loud farewell in scorn they sent the foe.  
Then died MARCEL? or lived? Who cares to know?

## XVI.

The welcome morning breaks broad up the sky;  
The birds rejoice; the fluttering leaves reply,

Sprinkling moisture bright as showers of snow,  
Which zephyrs scatter as they whirl below ;  
The orb ascending, warmer beams his light ;  
The winds are freshening ; forests feel their might,  
And fling their thousand banners to the breeze ;  
And clouds, like icebergs of the Arctic seas,  
Float the deep blue and proudly bear away,  
Till heat congenial fills the home of day.  
The cliffs are passed ; the openings through the wood  
Reveal the mansion, shining where it stood,  
With tossing shadows on its eastward side,  
And windows sparkling when those shades divide.  
The eager huntsmen cross the vale between  
With lively voice and step, now tread the green,  
And pass the portals of the open door.  
The chamber gained, what lay their eyes before ?  
The parent prostrate ! Ay, and cold and dead,  
Though hours but few had waned since breathing fled ;

And near the couch, with outstretched hand and arm,  
With looks of anguish fixed upon that form,  
ELFLORA stood, as stands the chiselled rock,  
Pallid and tranced by that heartrending shock ;  
And in her dark and moveless eye appears  
A grief too deep for words and too intense for tears.  
At last a painful shudder flushed her brain,  
And language of remorseful import came :  
“ No more, no more the object of my care !  
Oh this, O Heaven ! must I learn to bear ? ”

## XVII.

Day after day the bride, in mournful thought,  
Her darkened chamber's deep seclusion sought,  
And there in secret oft implored in prayer  
That her apparent disregard of care  
Might be forgiven, and her watchful grief  
Be soothed by hope and find in tears relief.

F

'Tis done ! Her nature ere that season passed  
Reaction feels, and peace triumphs at last,  
Suffusing calmness o'er her clearing brow,  
And where it gloomed a smile is radiant now.  
The youth, recovered, meets his blooming bride ;  
In her old hall they stand, now side by side ;  
The pastor speaks, proclaims that they are one,  
And prays to God to bless the deed now done.  
But ere he leaves them, with his calm blue eye  
On CLIFTON fixed, to claim for his reply  
Attention mute to words to him addressed,  
His admonition kind he thus expressed :  
" A woman's love ! Its home within thy heart,  
What angel joys, what peace, it can impart !  
In cot or castle it will shine the same,  
And yield contentment in its magic reign,  
Toil, sickness, sorrow in thine earthly home  
Its worth celestial make more purely known.

Then cherish always her whom Nature's laws  
Hath bound to thee and made thine own her cause.  
'Tis Wisdom's counsel. Addle-brained are they  
Whom stranger beauty e'er beguiles astray ;  
Perfect kindness hath almighty power  
On earth, in weary life's eventful hour,  
To tranquillize the heart, the human soul,  
And calm the passions into firm control.  
Oh, then be gentle in thy walk through life ;  
With kindest accents always greet the wife ;  
Then she will grow more happy every day,  
And smile on trouble till it fades away.  
The brightest gem, the grandest gift to man,  
Since toil for comfort in this world began,  
Is woman—noble, loving, faithful, true,  
In all she does, in all she ought to do,  
If man by KINDNESS only will impart  
That strength which lifts to Heaven her trusting heart."

## XVIII.

The Spring departs ; the Summer suns are high ;  
Heat fills the air, and dazzling light the sky ;  
Seasons on seasons roll their shades away ;  
Shrubs rise to trees, and trees themselves decay.  
The change of Nature and the winds and rains  
Relentless come, and scarce one mark remains  
Of that old mansion, save a crumbling pile  
Of logs, which nourish insects that defile ;  
But as they moulder down to dust and earth,  
Their darkening richness gives luxuriant birth  
To briars and brambles and the wreathing vine,  
Which, rising fast, around the ruins twine.



## COMING HOME.

**I** AM a happy man to-day;  
My peerless wife is happy too:  
A promise comes from one away  
That cheers our hearts, our hopes renew.

I see the future clear and bright,  
The harbinger of golden hours,  
When my dear family shall unite  
In hallowed Home's domestic bowers.

The noble youth we love so well,  
Who plucked our little blooming rose,  
Will soon return, and with us dwell  
In manhood's prime—in peace repose.



When winter chills each aged limb,  
And life's last sun is nearly set,  
My arduous tasks relieved by him,  
I can depart without regret.

Dear Father, of ten thousand worlds!  
Accept once more our grateful prayer:  
As day by day our fate unfurls,  
May we Thy watchful mercy share!



## LONELY, BUT NOT SAD.

THE vine-sheltered rocks, embowered, unseen,  
The blossoms, the bird, and the bee,  
The banks in the bloom of a bright summer green,—  
How welcome in childhood to me!—

Now Autumn's red leaflet falls silent and fast—  
On the waters' calm bosom it lays;  
The plants of the forest their flowers have cast,  
And the stem of the violet decays.

Like Nature's green mantle my playmates depart,  
Companions like flowers decay,  
But, closer than sorrow, Death came to my heart,  
And tore all my children away.

All spotless and pure as the fresh-fallen snow  
They entered the mansions above;  
Removed from affliction and heart-rending woe,  
They joined the blest angels in love.

Oh, had I another dear cherub like these,  
How willing from him could I part!  
For well do I know his bright spirit would please  
That Parent who loves a pure heart.

All mortals must die and be exiled from earth;  
Why end the last moments in tears?  
Oh, why not rejoice, when they know the new birth  
Immortal shall be in the spheres?



## THE INFINITY OF SPACE.

**S**WIFT as the sunbeam cleaves the sky,  
My soul, entranced in boundless space,  
A trillion leagues appeared to fly,  
And yet the end I could not trace.  
I saw around, on every hand,  
Great suns unknown and planets shine,  
So vast in size! so startling grand!  
'Twas fearful! God! were they not Thine?

Again my soul resumed its flight  
A billion billion miles away,  
Then paused once more to view the light,  
Which almost made the darkness day.

While gazing on the wondrous scene  
An angel form approached me near;  
I asked if he had ever been  
Where boundless space did not appear.

He said: "Ten hundred thousand years  
My soul surveyed the fields of space,  
In line direct through countless spheres,  
By mighty suns and worlds in place!  
There is no centre and no end!  
Great globes fill all the realms I saw,  
Controlled by stars whose radiance blend  
Obedient to eternal law!

"By ages taught, we see His might,  
Unchangeable in endless time,  
Inflexible in all that's right,  
Omnipotent in every clime.

My friend, for ever banish fear;  
A home there is for thee above;  
Then part from earth without a tear,  
But give to God a pure heart's love."



## OUR GREAT REPUBLIC.

### I.

**T**HE North in union with the South  
As ONE shall ever be ;  
Secure for aye each river's mouth  
By fleets on every sea.

### II.

By skilful hands and mines of gold  
Shall mighty harvests wave,  
And barks shall float a thousand-fold  
The ocean storms to brave.

### III.

A hundred thousand years or more  
The coal shall last to burn,

To send our ships to every shore,  
And billion spindles turn.

## IV.

Like mountain-heights enwrapped in flames  
The furnace-stacks shall be,  
Till roads of steel o'er trackless plains  
Unite the sea to sea.

## V.

Then let the glorious cotton grow  
In all the Southern vales;  
While steam expands and rivers flow,  
Our mills shall need the bales.

## VI.

Let Europe fight her battles o'er,  
To prop her shattered thrones;  
Our noble warriors nevermore  
Shall sack each other's homes.



## THOUGHTS ON LIFE AND DEATH.

WHEN I have reached a thousand years of age,  
And can behold on memory's truthful page  
My life celestial, ever shining bright,  
Without a sinful thought to shade its light,  
How happy then will my existence be  
To know from all remorse my soul is free!  
What, then, to me is pain or toil while here?  
But trifles these, ordained to disappear  
As constant progress lifts the soul above,  
And conquers all things with subduing love.

The Saviour said, "God's kingdom dwells within;  
Be *pure* in heart, be *kind* and free from sin;

Then peace and comfort, such as angels know,  
On you existence always will bestow."  
Why wait, poor worm, till death dissolves this frame?  
Cannot your firmness noble thoughts sustain  
Till passion yields obedient to the will?  
Though tempted oft, be sternly master still.  
Dash down the cup, the door to ruin close,  
Make God your friend, make peace with all your foes;  
Then welcome death, however startling near;  
Thrice happy dead if truly happy here!  
The wicked die, and anguish thrills the ear,  
In horrid groans, in sighs, and shuddering fear,  
The moment when they touch that dismal shore  
Where sin meets sin, perchance to part no more.  
The smelting furnace not so hot, so red,  
As keen remorse endured by all the dead  
When, unprepared, they pass from earth to roam,  
Without a hope, to seek the criminal's home.

And such a scene! a home without a sun,  
No moon to rise, no glorious dawn to come;  
No trees to leaf, nor fruits, nor flowers to bloom,  
But desert sands all wrapt in fearful gloom;  
The storm-like shade, for ever on the plain,  
Shuts out the sky from all that vast domain,  
Till every being walks he sees not where,  
And stops and howls, then sinks in mute despair.

Oh, how unlike the peaceful, golden strand,  
Home of the pure in heart, the summer land,  
Where all who live as God designed while here  
Find kindred love, and friends almost as dear!—  
A home prepared with gorgeous scenes in view,  
Majestic prospects opening, ever new,  
As floats the spirit on—away, away,  
From orb to orb, through spheres of endless day.

## THE LAST DAYS OF KATE LAMAR.

### I.

“FORGIVE me, dear mother ; to-morrow I leave—  
To-morrow shall bid thee adieu,  
And ask in my absence that no one will grieve ;  
My promised return I renew.”

### II.

“My daughter, my daughter, so brilliant at home,  
So full of the joy of existence,  
Again and again wilt thou leave me to roam  
In the near or the gloomy distance ?

### III.

“When thou art here with me the beautiful sun,  
With his cheerful and golden rays,  
Comes creeping about us till day is near done,  
In love with thy innocent ways.

## IV.

"And when in the silence and darkness we kneel  
With thy dear little hand in mine,  
No words can express the great comfort I feel  
That thus it may be in all time.

## V.

"The mind can imagine more beautiful scenes,  
Enjoying secluded repose;  
In page of the poet the splendor that gleams  
Grand pictures of life will disclose.

## VI.

"Then better by far be contented at home:  
Art thou restless again to see  
The ocean in storm, or the mountains alone,  
Or castles all wrecked on the lea?"

## VII.

Kate's attachment to home was doubtless sincere;  
Ambition beguiled her away;  
Her mother's affection made every scene dear,  
Yet failed to induce her to stay.

## VIII.

We begged and implored, as we rode to the boat,  
To leave not her parent in tears;  
Our words were unheeded; we left her afloat,  
To travel in Europe some years.

## IX.

The morning was cloudless, the noble ship lay  
Receiving the last of her crew;  
Then grand as an eagle she swept down the bay,  
As passengers waved their adieu.

## X.

The ocean was sleeping—no crest on the wave,  
No motion, except a long swell;  
The vessel was moving so proudly and brave:  
Her steaming no ship could excel.

## XI.

Thus onward till midnight she ploughed the blue sea;  
Though stars were obscured by a fog,  
They slowed not the engines, but let them work free,  
Though warned of her speed by the log.

## XII.

Then sudden as lightning that shatters the rock  
Against an ice-mountain she drove!  
So firm the resistance, so great was the shock,  
The planks were shivered, the bulkheads stove!

## XIII.

The vessel went down with three hundred on deck ;  
Some shouted, some prayed, and some cried ;  
The chairs and the fragments which broke from  
the wreck  
They seized, and to float with them tried.

## XIV.

As morning came slowly the brave-hearted girl,  
While drowning, looked round in despair,  
As she brushed from her eye a troublesome curl  
And shook the wild foam from her hair.

## XV.

To the petrels that flew so near to her head  
She stretched out her delicate hand,  
And begged them, for God's sake, while living or  
dead,  
To take her to some sheltered land.



## XVI.

The storm-birds were heedless; Kate sank in the  
wave :

The absent she ever will be;  
No rose nor sweet flower shall bloom on her grave;  
She sleeps on the sands of the sea.















